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IN THE HEART OF GERMANY

The Battle of the Rhine has been fought and won. General Eisenhower's careful statement emphasises that this triumph, complete in itself, is still a "preliminary" victory and that tough fighting may still lie ahead. The victory's ingredients were fine organisation, aided by good weather and good luck. To say this is not to disparage Allied generalship, still less the dazzling courage of the assault troops and air-borne regiments, to whose credit stands the success of the most difficult part of the offensive—the establishment of a bridgehead across the Lower Rhine and Issel, against the opposition of the still relatively intact First Paratroop Army. But clearly the clockwork progress of Field Marshal Montgomery's attack owed much to masterly preparation of special craft and bridging mechanism, while the "saturation" bombing of Westphalia in the week of cloudless weather before the crossing must have contributed greatly by creating chaos in the enemy's communications. Finally, the stroke of unexpected good fortune which enabled General Hodges to build up a powerful bridgehead at Remagen compelled Kesselring to split, to his undoing, all he had left in the way of armoured and Panzer Grenadier divisions to defend Germany's last great water-barrier in the West.

Not conspicuously successful last autumn, General Eisenhower's adherence to the strategy of Marshal Foch—an offensive on a front of maximum width—has this time paid handsome dividends. South of Bonn three U.S. armies are now in a position to exploit the collapse of the enemy's Rhine front. Irremediably weakened by the costly failure of Rundstedt's winter offensive, by the transfer to Hungary of the 6th S.S. Panzer Army, and by the disintegration of the 7th and 1st Armies in the Eiffel and Saar battles, the German forces between Cologne and Karlsruhe have manifestly cracked: unco-ordinated local resistance by remnants of the 5th Panzer Army east of Bonn and a handful of S.S. Regiments farther south is likely to be all that Generals Hodges, Patton and Patch will meet. The aim of their thrusts, already led by fast-moving armoured columns, is anybody's guess. Presumably, the 1st U.S. Army, swinging north-east, will aim at isolating the Ruhr by cutting the Dortmund-Berlin railway near Lippstadt or Paderborn, while the 3rd Army moves, in parallel, on Kassel or Erfurt. The 7th Army, once Karlsruhe is secured, would appear to have a choice between Nuremburg or Ingolstadt (menacing Munich) as its objective. However the penetration of Central and Southern Germany proceeds, it is already evident that few German divisions will be able to fall back from the Rhine for the defence of the Bavarian Alps.

As for the part to be played by the powerful, combined Army Group under Field Marshal Montgomery, we may suppose that much will turn on the behaviour of the German 1st Paratroop Army. If that army succeeds in effecting an orderly withdrawal eastwards to the lines, first, of the Ems, and then of the Weser, it will be of prime military importance to pursue and destroy it. Moreover, a rapid linking up with the 1st U.S. Army east of the Ruhr would offer attractive possibilities of encircling a large pocket of German troops now situated between Duisburg and Bonn. This being so, the Field Marshal might well be inclined to throw his whole Group eastwards across the Westphalian plain. On the other hand, the need to liberate the starving Dutch is clear-cut; and, particularly if the 1st Paratroop Army were to pivot northwards in retreat, with the idea of holding out in the ports of North-West Germany and Holland, history might well applaud a decision to renounce a race for Berlin in favour of less spectacular operations in the Netherlands.

From the resignation (or was it dismissal?) of Rundstedt it seems reasonable to infer that the German Commander-in-Chief, like Ludendorff in the early autumn of 1918, concluded, and probably reported to an irate Führer, that large-scale defensive operations in the West could not be sustained for more than a few weeks. When Marshal Zhukov strikes across the Oder, the curtain will fall on organised enemy resistance in the North German plain. The important thing now is to counter Nazi plans for a protracted stand on the coast and in the Alpine redoubt. This, we believe, is the purpose of the Russians' decision to give priority in timing to the offensive now launched jointly against the Vienna Gap by Tolbukhin and Malinovsky, while Koniev is striking south for the road through Moravia. Prague, Munich and Hamburg may prove to be more important objectives than Berlin.

Nazi Prisoners

A deputation of M.P.s is shortly to wait on Sir Edward Grigg to discuss the problem of Nazi prisoners in this country. Facts about the Nazi domination of P. of W. camps have been revealed from time to time in this and other papers, and by questions in the House of Commons. Now for the first time a full account has appeared in the *Central European Observer*, which published on March 9th an article called "Germans behind Barbed Wire." It amounts to this. The normal way of dealing with prisoners is to allow them to appoint their own "leader," who usually has the rank of corporal. Energetic young Nazis with the habit of domination quickly form a caucus and get one of their members elected; they soon have a Nazi cell in charge of the sports, entertainments, library, parades, "Nazi festivals such as Hitler's birthday", cooking, sanitation, etc. Only German wireless stations may be listened to; all mails pass through Nazi censorship. An elaborate blackmail goes on; dossiers are composed against non-Nazis, who are told that they or their families will suffer in Germany after the war. At least one anti- or non-Nazi has been killed and four wounded; there may be many more unknown victims. Regular "courts of honour" are set up, to punish those who do not "Heil Hitler." The article in the *Central European Observer* gives the example of a young German who impressed an Intelligence Officer, who only gradually discovered that he was one of the men who had taken part in the atrocious German burning of Lidice. He was exactly the type to whom the normal English commandant will give authority—well-mannered, capable and disciplined. A great improvement has now been made by segregating a few of the anti-Nazis in "White Camps," and it is from these that German voices are selected to broadcast to the German people. "The White Camps are characterised by a great enthusiasm for all tasks of re-education and subsequent reconstruction. The main task is, of course, to establish a bridge with home, with the help of the radio." The writer urges that these democratic Germans should be given an opportunity of learning much more about British institutions before they return. But the devilish question is what is to be done with a large number of well-fed, virile young Nazis who have had ample opportunities of making plans for future terrorism in Europe, and who may easily be the nuclei of the gangs which (like the *Feme* after the last war) will murder democrats and try to ally themselves with all the Fascists and thugs of Europe. We urge much more sifting and segregation. Indoctrinated Nazis should not go back to their own country. Perhaps, this anonymous writer suggests, this problem will be solved by Russia, which demands "German reparations in the form of labour, and which will no doubt be strong enough to cope even with these obstinate elements."

Independence Day

Seldom has the anniversary of Greek Independence come round, as it did this week, under darker skies. It would be difficult to exaggerate the physical misery due to the after-affects of the Nazi occupation. Food is now coming in, though in inadequate quantities and U.N.R.R.A will soon be at work. But transport is lacking and the mountainous interior can hardly be reached at all. Industry, moreover, stands still for want of raw materials. We commend the suggestion of the *Times* that our old lorries in North Africa and the Egyptian surplus of cotton should be made available at once. It is no less urgent to end the terrorism that still prevails under the Plastiras Government. Reports continue of incessant violence by armed partisans of the Monarchy against the disarmed members of E.A.M. One royalist newspaper has even boasted that it has now become "impossible to buy the Communist newspaper, except at the risk of life and limb." The Government issued the other day a decree reviving the chief expedient of the Metaxas Dictatorship—deportation without trial to the desert islands of the Aegean. Fortunately, it withdrew this ordinance under pressure, but it is clear that in the belief that British troops give them security, royalists, collaborators and Metaxas terrorists have now the upper hand in Athens.

Liberty or Order in Spain?

There was little in the proclamation which the Spanish Pretender issued last week which had not been anticipated by rumour. The document had obviously been prepared some time ago, but had been held back until Don Juan saw a suitable moment for its publication. Now it is clear that the ambiguous position of the Falangist regime cannot be maintained much longer. With Nazi Germany on the verge of defeat, somebody has to carry out the necessary shift in Spanish policy which will prevent the isolation of Spain. Don Juan has offered himself as a candidate, acceptable (he implies) to the Western Powers, who can accomplish this without opening the door to far-reaching internal changes. If the Republicans return, he fears civil war; for, however moderate the beginnings of a new republic, it would move towards extremism. This argument will appeal to conservative Spain. But it is a different question whether Don Juan can win enough support to persuade the *Caudillo* unprotestingly to hand over the reins of power. If he refuses to do that—and at the moment, he seems to have his own ideas of the way Spain can ingratiate herself with the victorious democracies—the only alternative is a popular uprising. That can only be carried out by leaders who command the support of the Spanish masses; that is, by Republicans. Unfortunately, effective unity amongst the old democratic parties is still incomplete, though that is the essential condition of radical change in Spain.

Russia and the Straits

The Soviet Government has given notice to terminate the treaty of friendship that bound it to Turkey. This was expected, for the relations of these two Powers have been uneasy throughout the war. Before they can be finally smoothed, the perennial question of the Straits will have to be faced afresh. There is no doubt that the Turks did abuse their power as the custodians of this waterway, by giving passage to German and Italian merchant ships which were, in fact, transports carrying munitions. In both World wars, though under different conditions, Turkish control of the Straits has inflicted the gravest damage on Russia's security, mainly by excluding the aid her Allies should have been able to send her by this route. A radical revision of the Montreux Convention is obviously necessary. What Moscow will propose we do not know. For our own part, we see no satisfactory solution in sight, save by a development of the United Nations machinery which will make it the guardian of this and other international waterways, including the Suez and Kiel Canals. The minimum reform must ensure that the Straits shall be open to all vessels of the loyal Powers, and to them alone, during warlike operations sanctioned by the Security Council.

Betro and Betac

Eighteen big firms, headed by Unilever and I.C.I., have formed a British Export Trade Research Organisation and are calling upon the lesser fry to join up. The main purpose of Betro is to undertake large-scale market research as part of the drive to increase British exports in both Empire and foreign countries. Simultaneously, the advertising firms have formed a parallel body, the British Export Trade Advertising Corporation, to work in with Betro; and the Department of Overseas Trade has given both projects its blessing. There is also proceeding a revival of the Export Groups which were formed in a number of trades earlier in the war, when we were still intent on exporting in order to secure foreign exchange. No one disputes the immense importance of raising the total of British exports in the post-war period, or the need for better organised efforts among British manufacturers to understand and cater for the requirements of the various foreign markets. This country can no longer afford to rely on its prehistoric marketing methods, or to take the high line it used often to take in dealing with foreign customers. The new steps are therefore to be welcomed, with the proviso that they will need watching—for export groups can all too easily turn into agencies, not for pushing British sales, but for doing a deal by way of sharing out markets with foreign competitors, on the understanding that the competitors agree to leave the British home market alone. We are making no charges against either Betro or Betac. What we are suggesting is that the Department of Overseas Trade will have to formulate a clear policy on the basis of which export agencies can work.

The Cocoa Scheme

The future of the cocoa trade is giving the Colonial Office a bad headache. Half the world's cocoa is produced by West African peasant small-holders, who have been caused severe hardship by low and unstable prices, while rich profits went into the pockets of traders, shippers and manufacturers. The West African cocoa trade has been in the hands of 13 European firms, who "pooled" together in 1937 to reduce still further the price to the producer. This caused so much resentment that for six months the African peasants simply refused to sell. A Commission of Enquiry was sent out, which delivered a stinging report on the methods of the cocoa trade, and proposed that co-operative associations of African cocoa farmers should be statutorily set up, so that Africans could have an effective voice in the marketing of their own crop. The war intervened, however, and in the last few years all cocoa has been marketed by a Government Board, which has built up a surplus of nearly £4,000,000. Last October a White Paper put forward proposals for the post-war marketing of cocoa. The gist of this was that the West African governments should set up special agencies (on which officials, producers and "other interests" should be represented) to undertake the whole of the marketing arrangements, and that the greater part of the wartime profits should be used to make these marketing agencies financially sound and enable them to ensure a stable price in the future. Part of the scheme was the rapid organisation of the producers in co-operatives, which would have full representation on the marketing agency. The scheme is clearly not perfect—the interests of the consumer might have been more explicitly safeguarded, but it has all the advantages of State trading, and will go a long way to help unorganised colonial peasants. Fierce resentment is now being shown by the cocoa interests, both in this country and in America. The Cocoa Association has been lobbying, interviewing the Colonial Secretary and producing lengthy memoranda, which all boil down to the fact that the trade wishes to return to the good old days of unbridled free enterprise. They are supported in their protests by the New York cocoa traders, who have managed to persuade the State Department to protest to the British Government at what is termed an infringement of the right of free access to the world's raw materials. This is the first attempt made by the Colonial Office to introduce a rational marketing scheme in the interests of colonial producers. It would be a miserable precedent if it now gave way to the opposition of the cocoa trade in London and New York.

PARLIAMENT: House of Cards

Tuesday

The Housing debate took place on Thursday and Friday. Possibly, when this arrangement was made it was not out of the minds of the Leader of the House and the Usual Channels that, however important the subject, there are many Members (including, regrettably, many Labour Members) who cannot or will not attend the House on a Friday. No doubt it is difficult to cancel long-standing engagements to speak in distant constituencies. At any rate, two Tories—W. Astor and Levy—made party capital out of the sparse Labour attendance at this much-ballyhooed debate.

The quality of the Labour contributions to it, however, was high. Silkin gave a comprehensive and constructive survey of the problem—suggesting among other proposals which might have seemed unorthodox to the older-fashioned Trade Unionist that there was great scope for the employment of women in housing, and that people should be provided with materials and guidance and allowed to build their own houses. Silkin's matter is always so good that it is a pity his manner is not a little more enlivening.

An aged builder, Sir H. Selley (who addressed the Chair as "gentlemen" and claimed to have built his first house 52 years ago), put in a bluff, quaint plea, rather in the Commander Campbell manner, for the man usually called a "jerry-builder." Austin Hopkinson explained that "The thing is so simple if only people would think." His simple solution was to have "no housing policy at all," no municipal housing whatever; when he had made this experiment in his own area, "all the builders for miles round came bustling into the area and put up houses as fast as they could." The House was left to assume that the same process, applied everywhere simultaneously, would be advantageous. Maj

Braithwaite followed—the spokesman, apparently (as Lindsay intervened repeatedly to point out), not so much of the Buckrose division as of the great building contractors' interest.

Sandys rose quietly to his first big Ministerial test and opportunity. He has an attractive manner, and he pinked Arthur Greenwood repeatedly and fairly entertainingly, but Members, looking back on his speech, found it lacking in substance and in substantial hope. He had a slightly disingenuous defence to the criticism that even the plans for the post-war period were not ready: "Whenever the Government produces a White Paper or a plan, what is said? 'Nothing but plans, plans, plans.'" No Member was quite quick enough to point out that a White Paper is not the same thing as a plan—is, indeed, often an excuse for delaying plans. The announcement of the appointment of Sir F. Pile—obviously the *bonne-bouche* or hot news flash of the speech—was received with some cheers, some clickings of the tongue, and much bewilderment among Members who honestly did not know if it meant action at last or merely more window-dressing.

The debate ended "not with a bang but a whimper": a 54-minute speech, to an audience varying from two to five, by the angular Craven-Ellis, who had hoped to be called throughout the day, and was determined to say his say now. Nor could the visibly impatient Chair stem the drab torrent of his words: there is no time limit to "exempted business." Nor dared the Whips conspire to have him counted out; for then the Government would not have got the Consolidated Fund Bill through, and then (it is believed) there would have been no money to pay for the war.

PONTIFEX MINOR

HOPE FOR INDIA

THERE are signs at last of life and movement in the deadly calm of Indian politics. If Lord Wavell's return to England means that he is considering some new departure in policy, we may dare to hope that the deadlock can be broken. The hopeful signs include two initiatives by Indian leaders, one from the Muslim and the other from the Hindu camp. Sir Zafrulla Khan, who made the first of these moves, is much more than a distinguished lawyer who has held high office; he is also a past President of the Muslim League. His suggestion of a method by which the British Government may make its contribution to an agreement between the two communities has attracted the attention it deserves. Put briefly, it is that the Government should now announce its intention to produce a constitutional settlement of its own, a year after the conclusion of peace, should the Indian parties fail in the interval to reach a settlement among themselves.

The psychological effect of such an announcement would be salutary, if our acts confirmed our words. It would affirm our determination that by one means or another India shall have her freedom at an early date. Few Englishmen realise how deep and widespread is the scepticism Indians feel about our good intentions. They believe that we are capable of using their divisions indefinitely as an excuse for perpetuating our own rule, while most of them suspect that we have consciously encouraged the minorities in their intransigence. Whether we intend it or not, our refusal to do anything until Indians are unanimous has had this effect. If Sir Zafrulla's suggestion were adopted, even the extremists of the two communities would understand that we had set a limit to their pretensions. It will be very much easier for reasonable Indians to find a solution, when once they realise that it is our firm will to bring our direct rule to an end. It is on this psychological factor that we rely, for if it came to imposing a Dominion Constitution of our own devising, without any prior agreement, the chances that Indians would accept it or work it are slight.

Everything turns, then, on the way we make our new departure. The question will be asked whether, after the failure of the Cripps offer, we shall find Indians in general and Congress in particular disposed to co-operate. On the surface there is little to encourage a cheerful view. In their party papers Muslims and Hindus are as hostile as they ever were, and yet in the All-India Legislature they repeatedly combine to defeat the Government. The prevalent mood is one of sullen cynicism. But one hopeful sign there is which has received much less than the attention it deserved. In the North-West Frontier Province, which always was a stronghold of Congress, though its population is solidly Moslem, a Congress Ministry has taken office after an interval of five years. This is for several reasons a surprising event. Congress is still a prohibited organisation: it was, therefore, a startlingly conciliatory act that the Governor should have called on its local leader, Dr. Khan Sahib, to form a Ministry. It was no less remarkable that he should have accepted, for throughout the war Congress has adhered rigidly to the policy of non-co-operation which it adopted when it insisted on the resignation of all the provincial governments it controlled. The most hopeful aspect of this change of tactics is that it seems to have been taken with Mr. Gandhi's consent, which is the probable inference from the new Premier's statement that before he accepted office, he had been in correspondence with his leader. If this conclusion, reinforced by parallel events in Assam, may be trusted, it should mean that Mr. Gandhi is ready not merely for passive acquiescence, but for active co-operation. There is no longer the shadow of an excuse for treating him and his followers as rebels. The outlook in India would be immeasurably brighter if self-government were restored in the Congress provinces.

The inevitable reply to Mr. Gandhi's gesture must now be the release of our political prisoners. Of these, beginning with Nehru and his colleagues of the Working Committee, we still hold 1,350 in detention, untried; in addition, according to the official figures published this month in New Delhi, some 5,000 persons are still serving sentences of imprisonment for their share in civil disobedience. If the Government is considering the new departure Sir Zafrulla Khan recommends, the psychological effect will depend on its readiness to wipe out the past in a large way with a general amnesty. Thereafter, the next step towards harmony would lie with Congress. It would be a wise act on its part, if it returns to office in its provinces, to invite the Muslim League to enter its ministries, even where the Muslim minority is numerically small. After these preliminary steps the formation of a National Government would no longer be an extravagant hope.

What then? Is there any device in sight by which the Muslims might be reconciled to their position as a minority in a democratic Federation; or must it come to separation? It may not be easy to give a cheerful answer to-day, but after a year or two of calm, Indians may come to see the realities with which they have to grapple more clearly than they do to-day. The feud of the two religions is an ugly and undeniable fact, but it has singularly little relevance to the one problem that matters—the dire poverty that knows no distinction of creed. Malaria and illiteracy, overcrowding and under-employment, the usurer and the functionless landlord scourge Muslims and Hindus alike. For both salvation must come from science and technology, from irrigation and electric power, from collective farming and the expansion of industry. Seen from this angle, religious divisions are a meaningless obstruction. Meanwhile, with this feud at its height, the constructive mind of India has centred its hopes on some such scheme for raising the standard of life as that of the brilliant "Bombay" plan which sprang from the initiative of the Tatas. It presupposes two indispensable conditions. First, it demands a strong central government which can plan the development of the natural resources of the Peninsula as a single economic unit. It must have the legislative powers and financial means to bring both the British provinces and the Indian States into line with its plan. Secondly, it must possess the confidence of the masses, for it will have to overcome their inertia, cope with their prejudices and deal firmly with many obstructive interests. In short, if India as a whole is to be lifted out of her poverty, the Federation that undertakes the task must have a strong centre and rest on a democratic foundation.

So stated, we can see the problem in all its difficulty. It is doubtful whether the main body of reasonable Muslims are happy in contemplating the solution of Pakistan. As an alternative Mr. Jinnah has from time to time suggested that he might consent to preserve the unity of India on the basis of parity between the two creeds. It is obvious, however, that if the Hindus, three in four of the population, could be induced to consent to such a solution, the powers of the Federation would have to be severely limited, while the provinces and the States would enjoy little less than sovereign independence. The Centre would be weak: the federal constitution could not be democratic, and any thought of an economic plan for the whole Peninsula would have to be abandoned.

This is clear from the lucid sketch of a Constitution which Sir Zafrulla Khan has contributed to the *Times* (March 20). Rather less exacting than Mr. Jinnah, he suggests a Central Legislature indirectly elected by the provinces, in which 40 per cent. of the seats would fall to the Muslims, with 50 per cent. of the Executive Council and a like share in the army. The subjects entrusted to the Federal Centre would be defence, foreign affairs, sea customs, currency and foreign exchange. He does not include even Posts and Communications, though he would concede some co-ordinating functions over these to the Centre. The guardianship of the Minorities would fall to a Supreme Court. It may well be that this is as much as the Muslim League is likely to concede at present. Doubtless it is better than a final dissection of India into two wholly independent parts, Pakistan and Hindustan. But it confronts us with a painful dilemma. If we want a united India, we must throw over economic planning. If we are bent on planning, we must face separation.

From this dilemma we can see only one possible road of escape. It is that the predominantly Hindu and Muslim provinces should group themselves in two federations. Left to itself, Hindustan (which must include the industrial western half of Bengal) would doubtless adopt a constitution that would enable it to plan its whole territory as an economic unit—that is to say, it would erect a strong central government on a democratic foundation. In its turn, Pakistan would be free to work out the kind of constitution it wanted. It would then be possible to link the two in a loose Indian Union, which might deal with the subjects included in Sir Zafrulla's sketch. The chief difficulty here would be to accept parity as a natural basis for the relationship between two such unequal units. But if defence and foreign policy are to be the main subjects of the Union, need it be confined to the Indian Peninsula? This war has taught us that Burma and Ceylon are integral parts of the Indian strategical pattern. Each has its own marked individuality: neither would desire a close political union with the Peninsula. They are bound to it, none the less, by the claims of security and by some economic ties, contentious though these are. If they should be willing for strictly limited purposes, the chief among them defence, to join the Indian Union, it would be better balanced, while the tension between Hindus and Muslims would be eased, for both of them are predominantly Buddhist. Where no ideal solution is in sight, this suggestion may deserve consideration. It would permit Hindustan to plan its economic life on a democratic footing without shattering the unity that has been our best gift to India.

HOUSES

The upshot of last week's debate on housing is that there is still no single Minister responsible for housing policy, and no essential change in the Government's programme. The appointment of General Pile as Director-General of the Ministry of Works provides the colour of military urgency, but not the machinery of military action. Both the Minister of Health and the Minister of Works made out as good a case as they could. They succeeded at any rate in presenting a more intelligible picture than Mr. Sandys had done in his previous utterances. Briefly, the Government's defence against its critics is that, appalling as the shortage of houses promises to be, they are doing all that can be done, and that no reorganisation of departmental responsibilities can produce houses without the men or the materials to build them.

This is a powerful defence, up to a point; for no one can pretend that the shortage can be prevented by any means which the Government is able at once to adopt. Yet we remain unconvinced that the problem is being tackled in such a way as to yield the best results that could be got in face of all the admitted difficulties. Our doubts apply to the emergency programme, on which the Ministers concentrated most of their attention; but they are even stronger in relation to what is to be done thereafter—that is, in meeting the main part of the need, which will inevitably be left over to be dealt with in subsequent years. Ministers put altogether excessive stress both on the *danger* of expanding the building industry too much on account of the immediate shortage, and on the desirability of leaving a wide field for private enterprise and for house-ownership. They were, moreover, wholly silent about the means to be used in keeping down the prices of building materials and components; one of them even used as an argument against trying to build too many houses the statement that such an attempt would lead to a runaway rise in costs, as it did after the last war.

These three contentions are all totally inadmissible. How far should we have got with the production of aircraft if we had allowed ourselves to be influenced by the danger of over-expanding the labour force engaged in making them? Perhaps it will be answered that aircraft and houses are not comparable. But why not? Is not the need for houses a vitally urgent public need that ought to be met by every effort that the nation is able to put forth? Plainly, in Ministers' minds, it is not; and that is the first count in our indictment of what lies behind the Government's attitude.

Secondly, is there any case for encouraging private enterprise in housing and private house-ownership unless, by these methods, houses can be built, of the right types, as cheaply and expeditiously as under public ownership? There should be none; and there is one in the Government's view simply for political reasons. They want to favour the building societies, and they believe house-owners (on the instalment plan) make Tory voters, whereas municipal tenants are much more apt to vote Labour. Therefore, they will subsidise private enterprise, though clearly the way of getting the job done most expeditiously and cheaply is to concentrate it in the hands of local or regional authorities, backed by cheap capital borrowed at the gilt-edged rate. This is not a question of who is to build the houses—the private builders will do most of that in any case—it is a question of who is to own them when they are built.

Thirdly, an increase in the price of building need not lead to a rise in prices, unless the Government allows it to do so. It should lead rather to a fall, by making practicable larger-scale production of components in the factories. What is true is that it will lead to a rise, unless the building industry and its suppliers are controlled much more effectively than they have been so far by the Ministry of Works. If the Government really meant business in this matter, it would now be arranging to take over a number of big war factories and turn them over to jobs of mass pre-fabrication instead of leasing them to private firms without any special consideration for the needs of housing; and the White Paper would have included plans for this and also for the effective control of the prices of building materials during the reconstruction period.

The plain truth is that in none of these three respects is the Government single-minded in its desire to get houses built in the largest possible numbers and at the lowest possible cost. The Ministers who divide responsibility for housing are all Tories; and their political prejudices rule out the obvious solutions for each of the main problems. We agree that, if these solutions are ruled out, they are doing nearly all that can be done; but what can be done under such handicaps falls so far short of what is needed that the alternative ways of tackling the job cannot be thus summarily dismissed.

There is a fourth question of a similar kind. Mr. Willink, in the debate, did his best to make it appear that if sites were not ready in time for all the houses that could be built, the blame would rest with the local authorities. He did this by leaving out all reference to the problems of land acquisition and planning powers or to the uncertainty of the local authorities about their financial position after the war. The Government, and not the local authorities, must bear the blame for these uncertainties; and it is most unfair to saddle them upon the local authorities, even if some of them have been remiss, as no doubt they have.

So much for the main problem, as distinct from the emergency problem of the next two years. In respect of the immediate future, the inescapable difficulty is, of course, that of labour shortage and of the necessity for directing a large portion of the available labour force to repairs, as against new construction. This difficulty is insoluble for the moment; but again much blame rests on the Government for not foreseeing it, and for making no preparations to meet it by getting workable plans for pre-fabrication ready in advance. The advent and disappearance of the Portal houses are not merely ludicrous: they have involved an appalling waste of valuable time. And even now the position could be made much better if real priority was being given to the return of skilled building workers from the Forces, or if training schemes were being got under way in the spirit in which the aircraft industry was expanded after 1940, and were not being held back by fears that in twenty years' time there may be too many builders instead of too few. If there are, which we take leave to doubt, surely we can face that problem by retraining when the time comes.

We pointed out last week the utter inadequacy of the "targets" for the two post-war years set up in the White Paper. Ministers, in the debate, simply explained these targets and said nothing to alter them. Only on the question of the temporary houses were they somewhat more explicit. The Portal temporary house has gone for good, though it may be succeeded by some sort of steel house built to last. The full allocation of 145,000 temporary houses is to be gone on with, but is to be made up of other types. Costs will be higher than those previously estimated—as much as £900 is allowed for in the case of the aluminium house, and £800 elsewhere. Temporary houses at such prices are obviously uneconomic; but are permanent houses likely to be built, under present conditions, at prices much less uneconomic, especially if any substantial number are to be built with capital borrowed at relatively high interest rates? The question of cost figured but little in the debate, which dealt mainly with the number of houses that could get built somehow. But cost cannot be thus ignored. Subsidies will have to be so big in any event, in order to bring house-rents within the means of the main body of wage-earners, that it is indispensable to keep costs down to the lowest possible point. Otherwise, the housing programme i certain to become the first victim of whoever af this war is set to wield the axe of public econom

This brings us back to our main point. The is only one way to get houses built cheaply an quickly in large numbers, and that is to treat th building of them as a job no less nationally im portant and public in character than the buildin of aircraft during the war. This involves (a) th building of the houses to public order, with th full aid of public credit at the lowest possib interest rate; (b) a national plan of buildin priorities, covering the entire building industr and the entire supply of necessary materials an components; (c) the establishment of Sta factories for the purpose, and a strict control ov private factories available for work in the sam field, and over the building industry itself; (d concentration of control in a single Minister, wi a properly constituted department directly und his orders. Not one of these things is at prese being done: in fact, they are one and all bein ruled out by Tory prejudices or departmen obstructions. As far as Mr. Sandys's reorganis tion of the Ministry of Works is likely to he towards the fourth objective, we welcome it; b evidently it can go but a little way in view o the continuing division of functions among half dozen departments.

A LONDON DIARY

Stories will be told of Lloyd George as long a people continue to be interested in Britis history. There were so many L.G.s; w can all pick and choose between them. In m boyhood memory he is the scourge of the landlor and peer, later he became the victorious L.G I disliked and distrusted at the end of the last wa He is L.G. the orator of the grand occasion an much more remarkable, the M.P. who could g up in a ragged House and talk so intimately th every Member felt the words were being addresse to him personally. Then I recall L.G.'s variou and futile efforts to stage a come-back; a con versation at Churt after he had thrown a fat f on the political waters, and his answer to my que whether the Conservative Party could not pro by it. "Do you see any green in my eye? he asked. Then there was the deeply trouble L.G. seeking an alternative to the war, and th dramatic figure, with white hair and black clo streaming in the wind, who so proudly displayed record crop of Cox's Orange Pippins. I hav left out the L.G. who, with a wealth of mimicr analysed the principal orators of his time, an decided (this was before 1940) that while w sat back as an audience and applauded the bri liance of Winston Churchill, "the man for common jury" was the simple and persuasi Stanley Baldwin. One story that I hope to s somebody print in full occurred in the darkest ho of March, 1918. Some members of the Cabin were near despair. When they arrived L.G. wa singing a Welsh hymn about the valley of th shadow and Smuts, also a religious man o peasant stock, was singing with him. L.G. short speech on that occasion reinvigorated an united the Cabinet and received, by request of hi colleagues, the unique tribute of being recorde in the Cabinet minutes.

* * *

Part of L.G.'s charm (which worked eve with his enemies) depended on his voice. Part it was due to his lightning quickness of pe ception—what Keynes called his "sixth sense One of my favourite stories of his quickness i action concerns the visit of Mr. De Valera t negotiate terms with Britain. De Valera arriv with an "ambassador," describing himself a President of the Irish Republic. L.G., wh was accompanied by Tom Jones, his compatri and Secretary of the Cabinet, brushed aside th ambassador and welcomed "Mr. De Valera The latter produced a scroll written in Iris headed, "Saorstat." "These," said Mr. D

Valera, “ are the terms that the Irish Republic offers to Britain, and for convenience, I have here he English translation.” But L.G. would only examine the scroll. “ What,” he said, ‘Mr. De Valera, does the heading mean ? ” ‘Free State,” said De Valera. “ What then s the Irish for Republic ? ” asked L.G. Mr. De Valera turned to consult his ambassador on this linguistic point. While the Irishman talked n English, Lloyd George turned to Tom Jones nd in the living language of Welsh, said, “ That's flummoxed him ! ” De Valera finally reported hat the Irish for “ Republic ” would be ‘Saorstat.” “ Just so,” said Lloyd George. ‘We Celts never have been republicans, have we ? ” And with the main point already scored, he ambassador was ushered out of the room, and he Prime Minister of England was able to discuss the future of Ireland, not with the President of the Irish Republic, but with Mr. De Valera.

* * *

A forgotten fact is that Lloyd George once—nd only once—pleased Lenin. At the beginning of *Left-Wing Communism* appear the following ronic words :

> I dedicate this pamphlet to the Rt. Hon. Mr. Lloyd George as a token of my gratitude for his speech of March 18th, 1920, which was almost Marxist, and in any case, exceedingly useful for the Communists and Bolsheviks throughout the world.

I should like to hear the conversation when L.G. and Lenin meet in the Elysian fields.

* * *

One of the most interesting sidelights on German morale has been the state of many of the *Volkssturm* prisoners we have taken. A letter hat I have just received from a soldier in occupied Germany confirms what the war correspondents have said. He describes the reaction of the armers near his billet. Most of them were stolid Catholic peasants who loathed the destruction of their farms by the battle that had passed over them. One reported that a small troop of Germans had held out in a farmhouse which Allied artillery then reduced to rubble. This had made such an impression on the people round about that they had done their best to persuade their own army to go on retreating. Yes, they had been in the *Volkssturm.* But they had only done two drills and no weapons had come. They were expected to fight with pitchforks and, like our early L.D.V., resented the lack of tommy-guns. This particular unit had been told to blow up two bridges. “ But we didn't. How could we then have got our horses and carts across the river ? ” This is, I suppose, what one would have expected n any rich agricultural district.

* * *

A high-ranking officer, who has been doing n important job in Paris, tells me that the rations e received were far more than he and the other officers with whom he messed could possibly at. They daily disposed of the surplus to French neighbours. I see that his view that ations at the base could be easily reduced for en serving behind the lines (which, of course n the present American and British armies is owadays the great majority) is confirmed by nother officer whose striking letter was published n the *News Chronicle* on March 23rd. He cites precedent for differential rationing in the services, and holds that, for all men not in the ghting line the present rations are wastefully rge.

* * *

The picture looks worse in the light of evidence hat looting by American soldiers is almost an ccepted practice, too seldom punished. Looting n a small scale happened in France when the Allies first landed. It is now happening openly nd continuously in occupied Germany. A reat deal of the loot is wantonly destroyed ; uch is sold ; some given away. A friend who is just back from Germany gives me a vivid arrative of going up on an official job to a flattened town with American officers who, when they passed a hotel that had survived the blitz, found themselves unable to resist the temptation of breaking in and filling up odd corners of the lorry with sheets, silver, and other useful articles. They were far from easy in their consciences. The disciplinary effects of tolerating this kind of thing are very bad. The effect in Europe as a whole if democratic soldiers behave like 17th century mercenaries must be to spread cynicism about the Allies and their intentions. Nor can we exclude the possibility that the Black Market, which in France is already so much organised and supplied by American troops, may reach dangerous dimensions in Germany. There will be lots of camouflaged Nazis, often racketeers, who will be only too delighted to play in with the less disciplined and irresponsible Allied troops.

* * *

I suppose if we urge that we cannot allow the European population, even the Germans, to rot in idleness and hunger, and that we must switch our organising abilities over from the making of war to the provision of wants in Europe, we shall get a barrage of abuse from some Beaverbrook and Rothermere newspapers. They will declare that we want to starve Britain for the sake of a lot of foreigners, and even ex-enemies. They will, no doubt, alter their tune when they realise that people seldom die of starvation, but of diseases which are infectious and which take little account of national frontiers. If you could take the people who advocate the total destruction of Germany and the non-rehabilitation of German civil life over to see what a town is like that is reduced to rubble, and what populations of starving refugees are really like, they would, of course, be horror-struck. Such propagandists are not wicked ; they are only the victims of illusions and slogans, and have never had their imaginations roused by the real spectacle of human suffering. Sooner or later, and I think sooner, the Allies will have to appoint some individual to a position such as Nansen held after the last war, and give him the job of trying to save millions of lives in Europe. He will only be able to do so if he has a priority that overrides at least some of the countless priorities that now turn UNRRA into the sorriest farce in history. Even to-day the teams of workers with their lorries equipped for the first job of aiding displaced persons in France cannot cross the Channel, although, according to experts, there are good unused barges that they could use if the military would let them. This has been going on for weeks, and every day that they wait, more people die. Ships loaded with goods for Yugoslavia have been lying in harbours opposite the Yugoslav coast, and been moved about from port to port and not allowed to go across to Dalmatia, where the population is not only under-nourished, but actually dying.

* * *

I am sure that these things will get cleared up in the long run when a lot more people have died, and much of the credit of the Allies is gone. The muddles and obstructions and delays are much the same type that held up the war effort for the first two years, when people in the Ministry of Supply and elsewhere were driven mad by the complication of the bureaucratic machinery and obstruction of military authorities and private interests. We only got a move on air production when Lord Beaverbrook was put in charge ; he infuriated other departments by diverting materials and man-power to his priority uses, but he got aircraft in a hurry. I am not sure it would be a bad thing to appoint Lord Beaverbrook to the task of feeding Europe. It would be a grim irony, because he always talks as if he did not mind whether Europe exists or not. But drop him in Cologne or Coblenz, confront him with the practical problems, and it is at least possible that he would display the drive and initiative that the head of UNRRA, Governor Lehmann, with all his good intentions, has so far failed to show. In any case, somebody with authority must tell the public what is happening, force the military to understand that the object of victory is not to destroy Europe, but to save it, and begin to organise a task of reconstruction and relief that is going to be as difficult and as urgent as organising the war itself.

* * *

A friend in the Army, recently on leave, gave me the following account of a personal experience in Holland. Every day after meals, children from the hungry village near by waited at the cookhouse door for scraps that were left over. There would be enough potatoes and other leavings to feed a couple of families. One day two men in the unit developed some skin complaint. It was immediately assumed that this was caught from the under-nourished Dutch children, and orders were given that no food was to be given them. My friend had himself the heartbreaking task of throwing the food into a hole in the ground and burying it, while the children stood at a distance with their little pails and watched. I asked if there were no alternative. He said that the Sergeant-Major was watching, and insisted on the order being carried out.

* * *

After 25 years of honourable exile Count Karolyi has been invited back to his native land. Once a great Magyar landlord, he stood during his short period of office as Premier and his long exile since, as a land reformer and democrat. A bitter opponent of the disastrous Hungarian oligarchy and an advocate of co-operation with the U.S.S.R., he has long been the leader of the “ free Hungarians ” in this country. When he returns to Budapest it will be with a high reputation for courage and honesty.

* * *

A true story from Russia : A young British officer, small in stature but with an excellent military record, was being conducted by a very big and tough Soviet partisan girl. She embarrassed him by her repeated regrets that the British, who were such nice people, were so degenerate. They reached an ice-bound river ; the girl promptly stripped off her clothes and dived into a hole in the ice, calling on him to follow. For the honour of his country and uniform, he too stripped and dived after her. What happened after I have not been able to learn.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to R. Coates.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Could Peterborough give any authority for his statement in to-day's *Daily Telegraph* that Lord Alfred Douglas won the “ Steeplecha ” event at Winchester in “ grey flannel trousers and button boots ” ?

Were all the Wykehamists of 1887 so soft that this could be possible ?—Letter from Old Harrovian, in *Daily Telegraph.*

The War Office is trying to decide whether to replace the A.T.S. service cap with a beret. An official said yesterday : “ It's a matter that requires very careful consideration.”—*Sunday Dispatch*

. . . I considered then, and I do now, that foxes convicted of killing lambs are a disgrace to an otherwise sport-giving breed. . . . I thank you, Mr. Editor, for placing me on the not quite unbalanced list, and if I appear on the border you must forgive me, as I have done little else except to hunt and help hunting for the past 55 years, and have read *The Field* (and sometimes advised its Editors) for at least 41 years.—Letter in the *Field.*

DAVID LLOYD GEORGE

WHY is it hard to realise that David Lloyd George is dead? Wiser and bigger men have sat in Downing Street, but was there one among them who equalled him in vitality and courage? No problem daunted him, and throughout the great epoch of his career his contriving brain was the focus in which all movement seemed to originate, not in our island alone, but in Europe also. Few men have roused fiercer opposition or deeper distrust, yet he was always interesting, because he was always a positive force. It was his fate to disappoint many and antagonise not a few, but did anyone really succeed in disliking him? Audacious in his youth and formidable in middle life, his charm remained with him to the end, and in his old age, while he cultivated his orchard, it was with something near to affection that most of us regarded him. He stands out a unique figure in our history, for he was the first man who owed his elevation to the chief place in the kingdom to his own personality and to nothing else. A Welshman by birth and a peasant by upbringing, he was the first man to break the ascendancy in our politics of the English governing class. The remarkable thing is that he did it with sure-footed grace and never betrayed a trace of the giddiness that afflicted the next Premier who repeated his achievement.

With three decisive events in our history the name of Lloyd George will always be linked. He led the movement that made our country a positive "welfare" State. He won the first World War. He wrecked the Liberal Party after stimulating it to the greatest effort in its long record. The true causes of all these events lay in long-range economic movements and in slow changes in our social structure. Destiny had fixed them long before the Liberal Party won its last creative opportunity in the closing days of 1905. It was the rising power of the urban working class and its new consciousness of its own strength that compelled the Liberals to throw over *laissez-faire* and bid for its support with a New Deal. It was the steady rise of Labour and the influence of the Russian Revolution that doomed Liberalism a few years later by compelling the propertied class to close its ranks and defend itself as a single party under Tory leadership. But when this is said, it is still doubtful whether any of these things could have happened just as they did without the influence of "the Welsh Wizard's" personality.

It was the glowing imagination of Lloyd George that lent Liberal social policy a scope and attraction it could never have derived from the colder brain of Mr. Asquith. It was his audacity and his joy in battle that turned the struggle with the Lords into the semblance of a revolutionary conflict. He had shown these qualities during his gallant opposition to the Boer War. They are not Anglo-Saxon gifts, yet they can rouse in the slower-moving race a surprising response when once the battle is joined. Again, it is doubtful whether, without Lloyd George's quick, imaginative grasp of the nature of modern warfare the first World War might not have ended in a stalemate. He solved the problem of munitions: he achieved a single command: he managed the diversion in the East, and for good or ill it was he who defeated every move for a peace by negotiation. There was no one else who could have supplied at once the courage, the adroitness and the popular arts that made him a leader of genius. It is even more obvious that his personality, clashing with the stolid talent and the sober motions of Mr. Asquith, made a contest over leadership and a split in the Liberal Party inevitable. That Party, without his mercurial and disturbing influence, would in any event have declined as Labour rose. But Lloyd George hurried the pace of the process and turned it from decorous decay to catastrophe.

Why was it that, after six years of premiership, Lloyd George never again attained a commanding position? The first part of the answer is that the Tories feared him. He would bend: he would compromise: he was always ready for "a deal." But deep down in him they sensed his peasant outlook. Socialism did not interest him, though he was always an enthusiast on planning: the ambitions of the urban workers he never fully understood. He grew up in a community of small Welsh tenant farmers, and he inherited the long feud of these chapel-folk against their landlords, aliens in creed, race and language. The Tories knew very well what this peasant wanted to do, even more than he wanted to win a war or lay the foundations of social security. His chief ambition was to tax the urban landlord's unearned increment out of existence or, better still, to nationalise the land. Why, then, after 1922 could he never contrive to bring about a progressive coalition with Labour? It had the numbers: he had the imagination, the daring and the sense for tactics its leaders lacked. If once he had found himself in front of a friendly working-class audience he would have read its mind, as it were, through his eyelashes, and would have learned to think its thoughts and speak its dialect. For two reasons this interesting development was impossible. Labour valued above all else its independence, but, in addition, this man's record filled it with an unconquerable distrust. It disapproved his Versailles Peace on general grounds, but with a bitterness born of experience it traced to his policy of reparations the scourge of unemployment in the shipyards and the afflictions of the coal mines. Though it identified intervention in Russia primarily with Mr. Churchill, it could not acquit the Premier of responsibility. He had, indeed, tried to wipe out that injury at the Genoa Conference, but there he failed. Few gave him his due share of credit for the eventual solution of the Irish question; but no one forgot his invention of the Black and Tans. The memory that finally alienated the workers from him was, however, his refusal to honour his pledge to give effect to the findings of the Sankey Commission when by a bare majority it recommended th socialisation of the mines. The chance neve came to him to wash out these blots on a gre career. His contemporaries judged him mor harshly than history will. The mistakes and th momentary infidelities will not bulk largely i comparison with his lasting achievement—hi conversion of the State into an organisatio chiefly concerned with the welfare of the masse

The sort of man he was explains both hi failures and his dazzling success. His was a active, welcoming and receptive mind. He woul listen to any suggestion, however daring and novel. Instantly, as he talked, he would selec what was feasible and fill in the details. Hi delight was to adapt means to ends and in doin it he was hampered by few hesitations. Ther was in him an unusual blend of the organiser wit the artist. He spoke with a conscious pleasure i his performance, caring, however, for the wit and the ridicule, the vituperation and the flowers o rhetoric chiefly as the means that brought him into intimate touch with his audience. He though of himself, it may be, too much as the virtuoso and chose the policies he would advocate largely because they furnished him with congenial theme for his oratory. He led, first of all, by charmin his audience and then by satisfying the instinct he "sensed"—a favourite word of his—in th sea of faces before him. His faith in his ow dexterity was in the long run his undoing. He would yield to pressure, as he did during th Versailles Conference and the tangles of th Russian and Irish questions, knowing very wel that he had bent too far, yet convinced in his own resilient mind that he would one day find a way of undoing what went wrong. Sometimes th chance came and he took it, but not always. In this startling career genius was always blended with frailty, and courage with subtlety. But o his grave we may write with sincerity the epitaph this Welsh peasant would have chosen: in a long life of struggle he served the cause of th "under-dog."

A PLAN FOR NATIONAL PARKS

THE conception of "National Parks" is not a new one. It is over a century since Wordsworth, in his Guide to the Lakes, made a plea for a "sort of national property, in which every man has a right and interest who has an eye to see and a heart to enjoy." It is a strange comment on the honour paid to the prophet that, while National Parks have long since been established in North America and South Africa (in territory unexplored in his lifetime), no Parks policy has until now been adopted in his own country.

Yet the comparison with National Parks in the Dominions and the United States is not a fair one. In Great Britain, with the exception of a few mountain-tops and obscure islands, there is no virgin country such as remains in the New World and in Africa. The acreage which has not in some way been affected by the actions of man or of his domestic or introduced animals is negligible. Similarly our native flora and fauna have been drastically modified. British National Parks cannot aspire to vie with those of Kruger and Yellowstone in extent or "wildness." They can, however, given the difference in context, more than compete in the sphere of natural beauty, historic interest and in usefulness for the enjoyment, health and education of those long divorced from their heritage.

No country of comparative size can compete with ours in diversity of scenery—coastal, mountain and moorland, brecks, marshes and downs—or such a wealth of unspoiled villages built in traditional styles of local materials. No country is so rich in country houses—from the great Tudor, Jacobean and eighteenth-century palaces to the homesteads of small yeomen, merchants and wool-staplers. In none are so many books and articles published on country matters, to be eagerly read by an ever-increasing public.

Yet no efficient curb has been placed on th desecration of some of the most precious area of rural beauty. True, we have admired the wor of the National Trust which, from humble beginnings, has achieved an extraordinary importanc in the national scheme and has yet to find worthy historian. The efforts of the Council fo the Preservation of Rural England and numerou other societies have been untiring. And the par of those landowners who have regarded their proprietorships as trusteeships in the widest sens should not be discounted. But all these effort have been based on the theory of property. Ther is still no *national* scheme for preservation.

On the "official" side the Standing Committe on National Parks has worked for over ten years We have the recommendations of the Addiso Committee, of Lord Justice Scott's Report an the White Paper on the Control of Land Use. I has remained for the Ministry of Town an Country Planning, whose present Minister, Mr W. S. Morrison, has made clear his support o National Parks, to carry out a survey of the possible areas. And the publication of concrete, i preliminary, proposals in the form of a Whit Paper is understood to be imminent. It is to b hoped that the White Paper foreshadows the en of the days when popular clamour against som grave threat to a beloved scene has been ineffectual to defeat the use of the private Bill, th powers of a Government-sponsored body or t bolster up the inadequate or ill-used powers o local authorities. Lacking a national control, th general public has too often been left to say, t paraphrase Cobbett's countryman: "All I kno is that I had a view and now the Government ha taken it away." But, unlike the effect of th enclosure acts, the spoliation of beautiful scener is the loss of the nation as a whole.

In the midst of the most severe conflict we have known, the formulation of a policy for National Parks may appear to some out of place. Yet is it not perhaps a good augury of a sense of real values? Health, the use of leisure, enjoyment of the open air and appreciation of natural beauty for as large a proportion of the population as possible are not the least important of post-war aims. Nor are they desiderata easily expressed in terms of money.

It is understood that the creation of a series of National Parks, giving priority to seven large areas—the Lake District, Craven Pennines, Snowdonia, the Peak with Dovedale, the Black Mountains with the Brecons, Exmoor and Dartmoor—is envisaged. Hadrian's Wall and certain precious strips of yet unspoiled coastline are also considered worthy of similar status, while it is suggested that some twelve areas should be reserved for the creation of parks at some future date. Such are the North Yorkshire Moors and coast and a large area in Central Wales.

In addition to the areas already mentioned, the suggested creation of "regional reserves" is a new feature. These, while not considered suitable for National Parks, owing to their small size, are areas where particular supervision is considered necessary. Such are the Breckland of Suffolk, the Cotswolds and the coastal heathlands of East Anglia.

It is emphasised that the creation of National Parks involves no transfer of property (though the power of purchase by the proposed Commission is recommended for certain purposes involving small acreages) and a minimum of interference with the normal life and activities of the countryside and the work of local authorities. Indeed, not the least function of a National Park authority would be to ensure, within its terms of reference and sphere of control, a countryside healthy in the sense of farming and rural industries. A "museum atmosphere" is foreign to the subject. National Parks will take their place as an integral part of rural planning.

The solution seems to lie in the appointment of a permanent commission responsible to the Minister of Town and Country Planning. Its members would be chosen for their suitability rather than as representative of any Ministry or particular interest. It would thus be able to work on a long-term policy, unfettered by political considerations. The members of the Commission would be unpaid; but it would work through paid assistant Commissioners in control of the National Parks or of a group of Parks. Its appointment would not involve a new army of officials.

The primary functions of the Commission would be the preservation from "development" and building alien to the nature of the areas under its control, liaison with local and other authorities (such as the Forestry Commission and Water and Central Electricity Boards) on any schemes promoted by them, and the admittedly very delicate adjustment of various, sometimes competing, interests—rambling, agriculture, the preservation of wild life and holiday accommodation among others.

On the constructive side the Commission would assist and supplement where desirable the establishment of youth hostels and camps, no doubt making use of and integrating the work of the existing societies, and would correlate the functions of organisations devoted to the preservation of wild life within its sphere of influence. It is perhaps not too much to hope that an advisory committee on the preservation of wild life will come into being to co-ordinate not only the admittedly incoherent existing legislation in this country, but also represent it on whatever international body is set up as a minor facet of post-war planning in Europe. Where migratory birds are concerned, it is at length beginning to be realised that the problem is a European rather than a National concern.

Another primary and most important function of the Commission would be that of education in rural matters and of publicity in the good sense of the word. The use of certain "National Trust houses" inside the parks as centres where visitors would have the benefit of an information bureau, library, films and talks by eminent scholars, opens up intriguing possibilities.

Such in the broad, it is understood, are the proposals, though it is impossible to cover more than the salient features. Whatever may be the fate of the proposals, one fact is self-evident. Although much irreparable damage has been done by selfish exploitation of the countryside by industry, building and the war, much remains. Great lengths of wild and beautiful coastline, an unequalled number of beautiful villages, the splendours of Berkeley Castle, Audley End and Castle Howard, the unravaged woods and moors, bird-haunted marshes and the well-loved pools of Fallodon are our unique inheritance and a trust for future generations. Never again will there be such an opportunity for ensuring the safety of our heritage.

Hugh Farmar

RADIO NOTES

After the almost sensational success of her playing of Debussy and Franck at the Wigmore Hall, Mlle. Ginette Neveu's performance of the solo part in the Brahms Violin Concerto on March 21st might easily have been an anti-climax. It was not. This young violinist is a complete executant, and her style, while characteristically French in its avoidance of emphasis, is both expressive and astringent. Her tone is nasal and attenuated, like that of an oboe, but singularly *pure*. Her playing reminds me in many ways of Szigeti's: there is the same ability to draw a melody as with a silver point, and the same exquisite precision of feeling; but also a certain lack of rotundity, which told against her in passages like the coda in the first movement of the concerto, and in the Finale. M. Roger Désormière, who conducted this concert is well known in France as a discerning conductor of modern music. It was, therefore, rather disappointing to some of us to be given nothing less well-worn than *Petrouchka* with which to judge his powers in this direction.

I could not care much for Francis Poulenc's new Violin Sonata, which seemed to me poor in quality—scraps of café music sewn together and then blown up to resemble a sonata. But in his cantata, *Figure Humaine*, broadcast on Sunday, the short-winded, yet always fresh and melodious and witty, nature of this clever composer's inspiration was seen at its best. The cantata consists of settings, for unaccompanied double chorus, of eight poems by the distinguished contemporary poet, Paul Eluard—poems in themselves original and passionate affirmations of individual life and liberty. The appeal made by these choral songs is strong and immediate. Their strains are the opposite of aloof: they want you to like them, and personally I submitted at once to the touching quality of their beauty. The texture of the writing is seldom if ever contrapuntal or otherwise at all complicated: the defined melody is simply given to one or other section of the choir, while the rest give their support in an harmonic block. This method is unusual to-day and made it unfortunate that in Sunday's performance the balance of the voices was faulty, so that it was often difficult to follow the melody. Also I think it would have been better to give us the gist of each section as it came along, instead of all together at the beginning. As it was, we forgot.

"The Arts," last week, contained what I can only describe as a religious assault on Picasso by the young English painter, Michael Ayrton. In a voice shaking with revivalist emotion, Mr. Ayrton accused Picasso of being the Dracula of modern painting, sucking the life-blood of young talent and blocking all the roads to progress. Greek art, El Greco, Cubism—every kind of vision had been seized and mauled by this colossal demon. Mr. Ayrton's own debt to Picasso may have embittered him; but in any case this is no place for me to attempt a puny defence of the greatest living creator in any art; so I will content myself with correcting one small point in Mr. Ayrton's apocalyptic discourse. As the one ray of light which might lead the young martyrs of art out of Dracula's wood, Graham Sutherland was singled out. That is all very well; but I feel bound to point out that the principal influence in the development of Sutherland's art—as he himself is the first to admit—was Picasso. It comes to this: if your genius—or your talent—is strong and individual enough, it will find its own way, in spite of, or through, other and older artists; if not, not.

Recommendations: *April* 2. Message of Easter (G.F.P., 4.15). "Walcheren" feature (7.30). New Poems (10.30).

April 4. Symphony Concert: Schumann Symphony in D minor; Rachmaninoff First Piano Concerto (7.15).

April 5. "Mr and Mrs. Brown" (Peter Watts feature) (9.30).

April 6. "Flight Deck" (Malcolm Baker-Smith feature) (8.15).

Edward Sackville West

FOUR SHOWS

Two newly opened galleries must be commended to the attention of Londoners who care for painting. The St. George's Gallery in Grosvenor St., while not very large, has an air of Parisian elegance. The exhibits are notably well framed. There are good paintings by Pissarro, Cézanne, Renoir, Rodin and Signac, Dufresne, the young Marie Laurencin, the little known Loutreuil, the sculptor Zadkine, Duncan Grant and Frances Hodgkins (a specially splendid example). This is a gallery we look forward to revisiting. And so is the gallery in Cork Street, once the premises of Mr. Mayor, and now taken over by Messrs. Roland, Browse and Delbanco. The first exhibition includes some good contemporary drawings by Sickert, Augustus John and Sutherland among others, but the older English drawings are many of them sensational. Gainsborough, Richard Wilson (note the Still Life), Fuseli, Blake (a marvel), Turner are nobly represented, and a Cozens is perhaps the most striking exhibit, a prodigy of concentration. Several of these have been lent from well-known collections.

At the Berkeley Galleries there are nine Matthew Smiths, of which the most remarkable is a picture of a harbour, painted at Dieppe a long while ago. It is remarkable for design as well as colour, and makes one wish that Mr. Smith would still sometimes make landscapes. Mr. Colville paints skilfully—the Still Life with the dead birds is specially good. But some of his pictures are like Czerny's piano studies, admirable as exercises, but hardly worth displaying in public. Young painters are now too easily tempted by one-man shows to exhibit their practice pieces. Henry Moore shows a number of drawings, again revealing his sense of colour as well as of form (will he soon, one wonders, experiment in polychrome sculpture?) Still more interesting is a series of statuettes some six inches high, mostly of the Madonna and Child, studies made in connection with his great Northampton statue. These are admirable and prove once more the immense value of abstract art as a preparation for handling figures. Too belatedly I must praise the Czechoslovak sculptor Vogel, who has been showing at the Lefevre. He is accomplished, sensitive, restrained and without mannerisms. He can manage slender as well as massive forms, and his portraits have character.

Roger Marvell

THE MOVIES

"The Sign of the Cross," at the Plaza

The London Film Institute Society

A very few of us, in a private theatre, had gathered for the return of an old stager. Cold criticism, of the 10.30 a.m. order, seemed a poor sort of welcome—if welcome it was intended to be—and no doubt my colleagues spent the morning, like myself, as much with their memories as in the screen's ancient Rome. We were given time to wonder, during a prologue, tamely contrived, of a bomber dropping leaflets on Rome. My own recollections, I am sorry to say, of this thirteen-year-old Cecil B. De Mille stunner were nil; I missed it, though I saw *Ben Hur*, in which, don't let us forget, the Crucifixion accommodated lovers in the foreground and the caption, "He died, but Love goes on forever." No such enormity makes or mars *The Sign of the Cross.* It is big, of course, but not very big. Laughton, with a Roman nose, plucks a lyre while Rome burns, or rolls a scented self-pity on thrones and couches—as crapulous a divinity as one could hope for. Miss Colbert, as Nero's wife, below suspicion, takes a foam-bath of asses' milk, fancies herself as Cleopatra with a handsome but unwilling Antony in the young prætor (Fredric March). He has fallen in love with a Christian, and at the circuses towards which the film mounts steadily he throws in his lot with the lion appetisers. I can't pretend that for a moment one takes this extravaganza seriously, but it is sober entertainment—yes, both entertaining and curiously sedate. Not breathlessly exciting, as I seem to remember the *Cabirias* and *Intolerances* of my boyhood. Not, certainly not, in the least abandoned, though it dates from the era of wild parties and Prohibition. Just big, placid, simple, like a cart-horse rigged up for carnival. We don't get such Roman holidays any more, but why should we? Juvenility has gone one way in film-making, experience another: we do, in general, both far better and far worse. Pile carpets have replaced sawdust. Well, it's a pity with the most popular amusement the world has ever known, but it can't be helped.

The London Film Institute Society in their latest programme included *Vampyr,* a pre-Nazi German rendering of Le Fanu's macabre *Carmilla*—sometimes imaginative, but too slow-moving; a pretentious film done from drawings by Masereel, and Grierson's *Song of Ceylon.* After ten years some of the experiments here attempted show as failures: the sequences are too much broken, the rhythm too staccato, but the film remains impressive by its honesty as well as by its beauty—one of the first English films of permanent interest. WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

MOSHESHEMOEE

Lord Halifax has been made a member of the Osage Indian tribe and was given the name of Mosheshemoee — an - eagle - flying - above - the - clouds.—*News item.*

Who cruises high above the clouds?
Mosheshemoee.
Who soars beyond the eagle crowds?
Mosheshemoee.
When braves across Salt Water sail
To blaze the New World sunrise trail,
Who sends a reassuring hail?
Mosheshemoee.

When 'Frisco council fires are lit
Beside the peace tepee,
And peace-pipe-smoking-eagles sit
To vote in their degree,
Who will they find already there,
Who will, far off, their councils share,
Though leagues above them in the air?
Mosheshemoee.

Big Double Eagle of the States,
Yankeedoodle dee,
Will greet war-painted delegates
For the Big Eagles three.
Some hawks of second magnitude,
Some like the common buzzard brood,
But lately raised to eaglehood—
And Mosheshemoee.

The Council, as it cranes its neck
Above the clouds will see
A distant but inspiring speck—
Mosheshemoee.
And as each brave begins his speech,
From heights as far as eye can reach,
Will float his optimistic screech,
Mosheshemoee.

The fighting cock with eagle crest,
Some think will disagree;
Some fear small fowl will be suppressed
To leave Big Eagles free.
But who was lately heard to say,
This peace pow-wow will be O.K.,
Big Eagle Chiefs will see fair play?
Mosheshemoee.

SAGITTARIUS

Correspondence

CHILD CARE

SIR,—The "public opinion" to which Mr. Justice Wrottesley referred in his summing up at the Gough trial has been directed almost entirely against the Goughs. This is natural enough, as a first reaction. But, in fact, what happens to the Goughs, whose power for evil is at any rate limited, is comparatively unimportant. The responsibility of local authorities, who apparently have the opportunity to maim lives on a considerable scale, seems to deserve more scrutiny than it has so far received.

First, there are too few routine inspections; that is more or less admitted. Secondly, the official who took the boys to the Goughs' farm stated in court that had he realised the size of the farm, and other factors, he would not have left them there. On the assumption that he had the authority to decide this point, surely it must have been part of his job to "realise" all the relevant factors?

It was also stated at an earlier hearing that two small girls were sent to the Goughs by another local authority, and that there were no beds for them. In fact, it was stated that Mrs. Gough went out next day, or a couple of days later, and bought some beds. How is it possible for children to be sent to a home where there are no beds for them?

Finally, what assurance is there that numerous children placed by local authorities are not even now being ignored by those whose business it is to protect their interests? F. I. T. F.

INSIDE THE ASYLUM

SIR,—There are hospitals in which an attempt is made to classify and segregate different types of patients and to treat each according to his need. But, as in other branches of the health services, there are not enough of these. The work is hampered not only by inadequacy of buildings, but also by shortage of skilled personnel. Attention has been drawn to the progress made in the use of the specialist within the hospital, and to the value of the work of psychiatrists, nurses and occupational therapists in giving a new outlook and new interests to the patient. It has been pointed out that the part played by social factors in the causation and treatment of mental illness is being increasingly recognised, and it should be noted that in consequence there has been a growing demand for the services of the psychiatric social worker, who is able, under the general direction of the psychiatrist, to assist in diagnoses and treatment while the patient is in hospital and to help him through the transitional period from hospital to normal life after discharge. She is trained to contribute to the whole treatment process by her skill in presenting to the psychiatrist a picture of the past and present environmental factors of each patient, which may shed new light on the causes of breakdown and influence the plan for treatment. She is able to give expert assistance with family problems which might otherwise hinder the patient's recovery or induce him to seek too early discharge. Equally, she can help the patient to make the fullest use of the work done by the hospital on his return to outside life; she can help him to maintain the new interests and outlook gained while in hospital and can prevent the wastage that occurs if he has to return to conditions that have caused his breakdown. After-care and rehabilitation offered as an expert service by a professional social worker is an integral part of the whole treatment of the mentally ill.

Psychiatric social work demands special skill and training, and there is at present a grave shortage of trained personnel and of suitably qualified recruits to the profession. Many hospitals are unable to implement plans made for developing social service as part of the complete treatment of mental illness; existing peacetime needs cannot be met, and the post-war years will bring increased demands for this type of service for those civilians and soldiers whose problems arise from the stresses of war. Plans for social medicine and the future of the health services suggest that important work will be done by those social workers who have special qualifications in mental health, and it is to be hoped that in planning for social welfare as a whole the need for a complete service for the mentally ill will not be forgotten.

K. McDOUGALL,
Chairman, Association of Psychiatric
Social Workers

4, The Drive, London, W.3.

SIR,—Few would dispute the need for ventilating legitimate grievances of the kind so vividly described by the author of the article and, in fact, it is open to patients and their relatives to report conditions which they feel to be unsatisfactory to the medical superintendent, to the hospital's Visiting Committee, and to the Board of Control whose duty it would be to take the matter up.

Because of the deep-seated superstition and horror of mental illness which has been so long ingrained in the public mind, it has been no easy task to establish psychological medicine in its rightful place among the health services of the nation, and to encourage people suffering from nervous and mental illnesses to seek advice at an early stage. That there is a pressing need for improvement in mental treatment conditions is generally recognised, but, fortunately, the experiences described by the author cannot be regarded as typical nowadays.

It is perhaps not generally known that until the passing of the Mental Treatment Act of 1930, mental treatment was, broadly speaking, not available to patients until they had become sufficiently ill to be certified as of unsound mind. The majority of existing mental hospitals were therefore ill-equipped to meet the provisions of the new Act, and a great number of reforms in many directions have had to be undertaken, for the full development of which time, and a better informed public opinion, are required. The grading of mild, acute and chronic cases is one of the most vital needs, and for this only mental hospitals of modern design are adequately equipped. The country badly needs a far greater number of hospitals for early cases of mental and nervous disorders, but pending their establishment treatment at a mental hospital is, with only a few exceptions, the only avenue open to the public. In a number of these modern methods, including the latest advances in physical methods of treatment, are available.

We fully concur with the writer's appreciation of the work carried out by medical officers of mental hospitals under the very difficult war conditions entailing great shortage of both medical and nursing staff.

OTTO NIEMEYER,
Chairman
EVELYN FOX,
DORIS M. ODLUM,
Hon. Secretaries
Provisional National Council for Mental Health,
39, Queen Anne Street,
Wimpole Street, W.1.

TRUTH AND THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS QUESTION

SIR,—It seems to me that Fr. J. V. Simcox has made the mistake of confusing *fact* with *motive.*

Everyone has always known that whatever conditions were granted for Catholic Schools would also be granted for *all* Voluntary Schools; so that in striving to obtain the best terms for their own Schools the Catholic Authorities were also, *ipso facto,* striving to obtain the same terms for any other body who wished to retain control of their own Schools. Several of my Anglican friends have, for this reason, expressed to me their gratitude for the stand taken by the Catholic Hierarchy, while regretting that the Anglican Bishops had not taken a stronger line.

But it is quite another matter to suggest that our (R.C.'s) primary motive in fighting for our own Schools was to save other people's. Nor am I aware that we have ever made any such suggestion.

FLYING OFFICER

CENSORSHIP REGULATIONS allow readers to post this paper to any part of the British Empire (excepting Eire and Northern Ireland) and to any country of the American Continent (excepting dependencies of enemy-occupied countries) but readers are advised to consult a Post Office or a newsagent before attempting to post elsewhere.

SIR,—Dr. Simcox's courageous stand for truth against expediency in the Roman Catholic Schools campaign ought not to be disregarded. In fact, it was Cardinal Bourne who, in order to further the campaign to secure the support of Catholic schools from public funds, first misrepresented Catholic teaching in this matter. Speaking in the Albert Hall on September 13th, 1929, he said that he made his plea not for Catholic schools only—*or even principally*—(italics mine), but for all the schools of the country, "in order that thereby the Christian character of England and her people might be preserved, strengthened and developed." Professor Vernon Bartlett challenged him to affirm publicly that "liberty of choice by the parents is a natural right for all varieties of religious belief" (*Times*, September 17th, 1929). The Cardinal made no reply. The fact is that the Catholic Schools campaign has been based, so far as the bishops and clergy are concerned, on a deliberate falsification of Roman Catholic principles. These principles are perfectly clear. Error, as such, has no rights at all, and nobody, whether parents or others, can have any right whatsoever to teach or propagate what the Catholic Church regards as error. Freedom for such teaching may, at most, be tolerated in order to avoid a greater evil.

Finally, it may be noted that the vociferous demand that Catholic children should be educated in schools which are wholly Catholic is largely vitiated by the large numbers of non-Catholic children who are admitted to Convent schools. Without the support of non-Catholic pupils neither schools nor convents could, in very many instances, survive.

WARREN SANDELL

POST-WAR SAVINGS

SIR,—I read with very great interest the article entitled "Peace but with Plenty?" in your edition of March 17th. I act as collector and group secretary of a fairly large street group (120 members) of which the total collection since the formation of the group in June, 1940, is only a few pounds short of £20,000. I am the Hon. Divisional Organiser of street and social groups in about one-third of the Borough of Wembley, and Hon. Secretary to the Wembley Street Groups' Sub-Committee, and, in addition, am an *ex-officio* member of the Industrial Sub-Committee.

I agree with you, that *generally* speaking, the man in the street has not been made to understand the full implications in savings, but for many, many months now we have been urging the dropping of *War* saving in favour of *National* saving, to ease the transition from the war to a peace campaign. At a meeting of our local committee nearly a year ago, we discussed the desirability of invoking support for post-war savings along the lines you suggest, but we are not allowed to step out of line with the other committees. The general policy of the movement is, of course, dictated by the National Committee. I do, however, feel very strongly that the real worth of the work at least be understood by the *workers*, if they are to continue with enthusiasm after the war (indeed, in many instances if they are to continue at all!). As Divisional Organiser for Kingsbury, I send to all collectors and group secretaries (about 100) a monthly news letter, in which I try to make them see that—well as we have done during the war years—it is only a case of "well begun is half done," and that unless our movement continues in strength, much of our previous effort will be wasted. The conversion of the general public to this realisation is, of course, a matter for the National Committee, and one which I believe is being tackled by them, but my chief fear is that, if there is delay in spreading the necessary propaganda, the lack of public support will cause many already weary workers to throw up the task. If this happens, I think that organised saving on a scale comparable with the war years will be impossible, for even now gaps in our ranks are becoming almost impossible to fill.

FREDA PILGRIM

PRICE CONTROL OF HOUSES

SIR,—I have read with considerable interest the letter of Eric N. Neave. His scheme for controlling the selling price of houses is simple and might be practical, although it would throw much more work and a very heavy responsibility upon District Valuers whose offices are already congested with wartime problems, such as the War Damage Act and Compensation (Defence) Act, etc. The only criticism I have to offer is that any such control would stop all transactions in such properties except in the few instances where for some special reason—probably financial embarrassment—owners are forced to sell. There would also be the added difficulty of great delay in completing all such transactions.

The Committee which has just been set up by the Government as an advisory body on this problem will no doubt collect all relevant information and opinions, and we must await the result of their deliberations.

Whilst sympathising with the object in view I would express my personal opinion that the only practical control of the selling price of houses already built is by tackling the cost price of similar new buildings. This is the only yardstick for the buyer, but, of course, until building is again possible even this is not available.

Many diverse views will, no doubt, be submitted to the Committee. It occurs to me, however, that where a particular form of investment is singled out for special taxation with obvious effects upon value, and where considerable numbers of such investors have suffered grievous losses that are not compensatable under the War Damage Act it is open to question whether such a restriction as is to be discussed should be imposed.

F. S. I.

WHY SMALL FAMILIES?

SIR,—Moya Woodside's article makes refreshing reading. As a potential mother, I am very impatient with the powers that urge us to have more babies without inquiring why we do not.

Women of my grandmother's generation had large families because, as one countryman would say to another who was "expecting": "Stock is better than money." When the children were thirteen or younger, they added to the family income and, with the children's earnings, a house could be bought and savings made for the future. Child labour was the alternative to old age pensions. The public attitude to children has so changed that a family is no longer a financial asset but a burden. Parents now willingly accept the dependence of their children to the age of sixteen or over, and their children expect, and should expect, far more leisure and enjoyment than did the hard-working children of my parents' generation. In as much as the smaller family represents a more humane attitude to children it is to be welcomed.

The Victorian size of family is a thing of the past. Whether the present average of two children continues depends, I think, on the continuation of insecurity. Most people will risk bringing two children into the world even when the world is as mad as it is now; the urge for children cannot be completely stifled. Only a more stable world will make the average number of children higher.

3, Polstead Road, M. A. WINTERTON
Oxford.

SIR,—If Moya Woodside's researches had been among the educated middle and upper classes, I am sure she would have found that the chief obstacle in the way of larger families is lack of domestic help. My own case is typical: two children aged three and one, no domestic help at all, and no relative near enough to lend a hand, even for an hour or two. With all the housework of a fairly large house to do and almost all the washing, now that the laundry calls to collect and deliver once in three weeks, as well as the family to look after and cook for, I find by the end of the day that I have exhausted my energies, mental and physical. My husband (and I realise how fortunate I am to have him at home) helps when he can, but he is out almost all the time that the children are not in bed. We feel even with only two children that we have as much as we can cope with at present.

In view of this, it will perhaps be argued that a longer interval between the babies is desirable, but apart from the obvious advantages to the children if they are near in age, the family's freedom is curtailed over a much longer period if the babies arrive at intervals of several years. Here again an occasional mother's help would be a godsend to a mother at the end of her tether for lack of an hour or two to spend as she chooses. Surely in no other job is one expected to be on duty twenty-four hours a day all the year round for years on end. Devoted to my children as I am, I should be greatly refreshed by an occasional afternoon or evening away from them, and from my home, and I should no doubt return a better mother. I cannot but confess that I am looking forward to the day when their departure to school will give me some small measure of freedom again. At the moment, even a visit to the dentist has to be elaborately planned for weeks ahead.

I am not complaining—I am fortunate indeed to have two healthy small daughters—but if I am to have more, I must also have some one to help to deal with them. An extension of the Local Government's home help schemes seems to offer the most possible solution to this problem in the near future.

E. M. B.

SERVICE ANTHOLOGY

SIR,—I am working on an Anthology of stories, poems, articles and letters produced by Service personnel serving in the Far East. I would be most grateful if any of your readers, who have relatives or friends in SEAC, could forward to me copies of letters, or extracts from letters, which they think might be of interest to the general public. The angles I am after are (1) detailed personal accounts of activities behind the lines, particularly in contact with Indians and Indian life, (2) descriptions of first impressions of India, and of reactions found among colleagues unfamiliar with Eastern conditions, and (3) impressions of the campaigns on the Burma front. If necessary the writers could remain anonymous, although I would prefer to publish their names, units and ranks, and a fee would be paid on publication.

42, Elm Park Gardens, A. J. ALEXANDER
London, S.W.10.

FREEDOM PRESS

SIR,—Further to the letter you published recently, signed by Alex Comfort, T. S. Eliot, E. M. Forster, Ethel Mannin, John Middleton Murry, Herbert Read, Reginald Reynolds, D. S. Savage, Stephen Spender and Julian Symons, protesting against the police action directed against Freedom Press and its sympathisers, I should be glad if you would bring these new facts to the attention of your readers.

On February 22nd, four London anarchists were arrested and face a charge under Defence Regulation 39A, which concerns incitement to disaffection. These four, Vernon Richards, Marie Louise Berneri, Dr. John Hewetson and Philip Sansom, are closely associated in the production of the fortnightly paper *War Commentary* and the Freedom Press publications; in addition, Vernon Richards and Marie Louise Berneri are proprietor and manageress respectively of Express Printers, the printers for Freedom Press, and Dr. Hewetson is the proprietor of Freedom Press.

It has been decided to set up a Defence Committee on a broad basis, to include individuals and organisations interested in the maintenance of that degree of freedom of expression still permitted to us, with these main objectives: (1) Defence of the four arrested anarchists; (2) protest against any such attacks upon the freedom of speech and publication; (3) formation of a Defence Fund to cover the legal expenses of the accused and the Committee's own expenses.

The Chairman of the Freedom Press Defence Committee is Herbert Read and the Secretary is Ethel Mannin. Vice-chairmen include Fenner Brockway and Patrick Figgis; the Treasurer is S. Watson Taylor. Premises have been secured at 17, St. George St. (second floor), Hanover Sq., W.1, from which the Committee's activity is being directed. We appeal particularly for funds, without which the work of the Committee cannot go forward effectively. Cheques and postal orders should be crossed, made payable to Freedom Press Defence Committee and sent to the Treasurer at the above address.

HERBERT READ,
Chairman,
Freedom Press Defence Committee.

17, St. George St.,
Hanover Square,
London, W.1.

BOOKS IN GENERAL

Why is it that Ernest Dowson has been more closely and copiously scrutinised, in critical biographies and reminiscences, than any other minor poet of the rather depressing period called, by Richard Le Gallienne, "the romantic Nineties"? First, no doubt, because there was indeed a "romantic" quality in the pride that atoned for Dowson's frailties and fortified his apparent helplessness under misfortune. "Johnson and Dowson most I praise," wrote W. B. Yeats, recalling his companions of the Rhymers' Club. These "kept the Muses' sterner laws" against the world, in spite of "wine or women or some curse." But, next, wine, women and hereditary curses certainly make exciting themes for the biographers of *poètes maudits,* from Villon to Verlaine; for the common reader, too, after the poet is safely dead. When he is alive, a dejected person who is only "at his best in a cabman's shelter" is usually a worry to the friends who try in vain to help him, as well as a puzzle, and perhaps a bore, to cabmen.

Cabmen are conventionally-minded in their social relationships, and those of the Nineties must certainly have been shocked by the ragged appearance of a visitant "toff" of whom Vincent O'Sullivan in his admirably discerning *Aspects of Wilde* has written: "Dowson's neglect of his personal appearance went to lengths which I have never seen in anybody else still on the surface, and hardly in bums and beats and down-and-out tramps forced by hardship to a condition which they have not the means to remedy. The thing about Dowson was that he did not want to remedy it."

Lastly, Dowson's verse, with all its modish "decorations," its viols, violets and villanelles, its Chloe, Cynara, Neobule, Manon, and Seraphita, does still carry authentically, pathetically, his predominant moods and emotions of regret, remorse and, finally, of despair.

This latest and weightiest book about the unlucky poet comes from the U.S.A.;* and I may remark, in passing, that since the Germans began to take out their revolvers whenever they heard the word culture, the American Universities, with their large endowments and their Faculty Research Committees, have intervened and equalled or outstripped the old-fashioned German industry in the minute prosecution of English studies. Certainly Mr. Mark Longaker's *Ernest Dowson* is minute. Mr. Longaker seems to have read every book and periodical concerning the period; he has pursued Dowson indefatigably through the memories of all survivors who might have a word to say concerning him. He has walked about the streets of London tracking his footsteps, lamenting discrepancies in oral reports of him, sitting by candlelight in black-outs, talking about him in tones "which would have attracted any enemy within a mile." Those who have written monographs about Dowson, those who, even after this exhaustive treatise, intend to write others, have all been consulted, and all are saluted with gratitude. We then proceed to follow Dowson from infancy to early death, with an increasing suspicion that we are pursuing him in a manner that would have darkened the haunted look in his terrified eyes, as we see them in the portraits by William Rothenstein and Conder; or, more revealingly, in an Oxford photograph which shows him in a blazer and striped trousers, huddled in a false-antique chair, withdrawn into himself.

None of this detail is negligible to the conscientious biographer. It is unfortunate only that, in the matter of interpretation, Mr. Longaker confers upon Dowson's mind and thought, in "trends," "tendencies" and the like, a burden that seems to make of him, particularly in his abbreviated undergraduate days, a sort of philosophical Atlas, shouldering the World as Will and Idea, after Schopenhauer; whereas, had we known him, in his bowler hat at Queen's, with those whom Mr. Longaker oddly calls his "classmates," we should have recognised in him and in them only a few more of the "gifted" youths who think it amusing to be gloomy. Dowson's intellectual moodiness came, not from profound meditation, but from a bad inheritance. The father may have committed suicide; the mother certainly did. Their boy was "born tired" and, as poverty descended upon him, accompanied by a developing sense of sin, he fixed his remaining hope upon the delusion (entertained by no sane mother of to-day) that all childhood is absolute innocence; that lost innocence, in adult age, can be recovered by the love of little girls; and, worse still, that it can be recovered by trying to marry one of them: a thing that another despairer, Dowson's contemporary, Francis Thompson, who shared this delusion, would never have attempted; for he realised that infantile affections must be evanescent—

> I am but, my sweet, your foster-lover,
> Knowing well, when certain years are over,
> You vanish from me to another.

Dowson, on the contrary, followed his little girl, Adelaide, from a Polish café in London, with an extenuating adoration comparable only (as he compared it) with the idolatry that wrecked the nerves of a much greater consumptive poet, the Keats of those deplorable letters to Fanny Brawne. Adelaide appears, throughout Mr. Longaker's account, as "Missie." She seems to hiss derisively at us in that exasperating pet-name. She wisely married a waiter. It was to her as Adelaide, and not as "Missie," that Dowson dedicated his poems, quoting inappropriate sentences from *L'Education Sentimentale.* What would Flaubert have said to this contempt of his moral instruction? Flaubert condemned sentimental prostrations. I will add that, in his visions of unstained purity, Dowson was eminently Victorian. Do we not get, in a hundred nineteenth-century novels, and particularly in the novels of Charles Dickens, the ideal of the child-wife whose "innocent maidenhood awoke to married innocence," as Rossetti put it? I confess that I find this nostalgic vision of virginal matrimony at once absurd and repugnant.

However, like most idealists of an immaculate womanhood, Dowson enjoyed the subordinate company of more enlivening Young Persons; of girls "who enjoyed life to the extent of becoming indifferent to such troublesome things as reputations." Mr. Longaker conscientiously tries to classify them. There was, for example, Dulcie, who became impatient of the small attention paid her during a discussion of art and literature in Conder's rooms in Duke Street, and retired to Conder's bedroom, whence she returned with nothing on but her shoes. "Where Dulcie came from, and even such details as her full name, have never been satisfactorily clarified by Dowson's friends." Who can wonder? But again Mr. Longaker is vexed by vagueness in memories and meagreness of information. Others may feel that Dulcie's sole name and her nudity are for the moment enough; until perhaps we get some day, in the manner of Miss Marion Plarr's clever novel, *Cynara,* an imaginary reconstruction of Dulcie—by herself.

Other friends of the saloon-bar group were the "comely Scottish girl," Essie, of whom "it is reported that she married a hardy lad in the North Country"; and Marie, who *may* have been Essie under another name, "since the circumstances that surrounded them were similar"; and "some of the girls who moved in the circles of the artists found it convenient at times to change their names." One sympathises with the biographer's patient perplexity. One admires his kindness of heart, as he sorrowfully warns us that Dowson's companionships "at times fell to a level which cannot be mentioned in the same breath" with Dulcie and Marie (or Essie), who in turn, we take it, cannot be mentioned in anything like the same breath with Missie. Yet one regrets that Mr. Longaker should worry himself about points of identification and characterisation "in the circles of the artists." And one turns with relief to a re-reading of Dowson's poems, which, with the possible exception of the celebrated *Non sum qualis eram* (*Cynara*), do not demonstrably depend for their existence on any ascertainable level of high or low companionship.

Mr. Longaker, who is stronger as a biographer than as a critic, remarks, justly, in his introductory note, that Dowson is "by no means a poet of the first rank." Yet he proclaims, later, that "a sequence of intimate verses remains that can hardly be paralleled. Shakespeare's sonnets, Meredith's *Modern Love* and Housman's *Shropshire Lad* are all artificial beside this real thing."

This surely is not well said; for Dowson's verse, as I have suggested, abounds in adornments and borrowings that do not mar its essential sincerity. Swinburnian echoes sound across it; and Swinburne was bookish or "artificial." For example: "Keep silence now, for singing time is over" (Swinburne). "Let be at last; give over words and sighing" (Dowson). "Let us go hence my songs; she will not hear" (Swinburne). "Let us go hence: the night is now at hand" (Dowson). "Take hands and part with laughter, Touch lips and part with tears" (Swinburne). "Let's kiss when kissing pleases, And part when kisses pall" (Dowson). "Ask nothing more of me, sweet; All I can give you I give" (Swinburne). "All that I had I brought, Little enough I know" (Dowson). And so on. While, to please literary-puzzle competitors, I will quote

> Beyond the need of weeping,
>   Beyond the reach of hands,
> May she be quietly sleeping
>   In what dim, nebulous lands?

By whom? By Christina Rossetti, one would swear; until "nebulous" betrays Dowson, and the last line the influence of Poe:

> In what ethereal dances,
> By what eternal streams?

One must not claim, therefore, either marked originality or stern reality for Dowson's "intimate verses." To quote a line he would have loved, they were sent forth as "frail pale wings for the wind to try." And certainly *tot per impotentia freta* they have fluttered very far until to-day. The breezes have favoured them. I hope that their fragility will resist the gusts, flaws or *puffs* in winds of a criticism that is now beginning to treat Dowson as though he were Dante.

This assiduity of investigating criticism has indeed so long weighed upon the last decade of the nineteenth century that we are beginning to forget that it produced any poetry and prose apart from the fragments associated with "the Beardsley period," as Mr. Osbert Burdett has named it. An American critic writes of "the yellow Nineties," Mr. Murdoch of "the renaissance of the Nineties," Mr. John Lewis May of "John Lane and the Nineties"; all in reference to one literary generation, as Mr. T. S. Eliot dates it, with emphasis, in his essay on Arthur Symons's translation of Baudelaire. Thus literary *productions* of shades finer than yellow are overlooked, in spite of their contemporary influence. We no longer remember that the Nineties opened, in scholarly traditional fashion, with the publication of Bridges' *Shorter Poems* (1890); that the yelp of Kipling's *Barrack Room Ballads* (1892) was heard between the first *Book of the Rhymers' Club* and the second; that, presently, true-blue effaced yellow in Henry Newbolt's *Admirals All* (1897); that William Watson and Laurence Binyon and Housman were publishing their first volumes of verse; and that a profounder pessimist than Dowson, Thomas Hardy, made his first appearance as a poet in the *Wessex Poems* of 1898.

All this suggests that, from the advertising point of view, it is good for young men of one literary generation to gather in cliques, coteries, clubs and pubs. There is no harm in belonging to a school of art, so long as one does not believe in it. But it is well also to recall a remark attributed to Jean Moréas, whom Anatole France called the Ronsard of the Symbolist Movement. "Schools are just silliness," he said: *les écoles, c'est des bêtises.*

RICHARD JENNINGS

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* *Ernest Dowson.* By MARK LONGAKER. University of Pennsylvania Press. *Humphrey Milford.* 24s.

NEW NOVELS

The Commodore. By C. S. Forester. *Michael Joseph.* 9s. 6d.

On the Side of the Angels. By Betty Miller. *Robert Hale.* 8s. 6d.

Independent People. By Halldor Laxness. *Allen and Unwin.* 12s. 6d.

The success which Mr. C. S. Forester has enjoyed with his Hornblower stories (of which *The Commodore* is the latest) is in no way accidental. They are stories of action, constructed round the character of one man, on a strict rule that the mental and emotional sources of action in that man are never lost to view. It is a limited objective, though one by no means to be despised, and Mr. Forester has made himself a master of the means to attain it. He has an excellent narrative style of the matter-of-fact kind, self-effacing and free from apparent tricks. The story moves as it is written, straightforwardly. Yet it is not uniform or monotonous as a series of matter-of-fact statements is apt to be; the style is flexible, quickening and slowing its rhythm in a not too obvious way as the rhythm of action changes. The appearance of straightforwardness is not achieved without care and skill.

Captain Hornblower, too, is no mere adventure-story character in the *Boy's Own Paper* sense. Mr. Forester's approach in characterisation is a modern and a sophisticated one. With Hornblower, reflection precedes action; analysis accompanies it; doubts and self-examination follow it. And the idiosyncrasies and superficial inconsequences which he allows himself are fitted in to the general make-up of the man.

All this, in an adventure-story writer, adds up to great strength. Is it surprising that Mr. Forester should ring the bell so repeatedly? *The Commodore* rings it again. The year has advanced to 1812, and Captain Hornblower's career has advanced too, so that it is as commodore of a squadron, and bearing responsibilities of diplomacy as well as of seamanship, that Hornblower sails into the Baltic to take part in the mighty events that are boiling up in North-Eastern Europe. As usual, Mr. Forester shows great expertness on sailing-ships and on naval history, as well as an affectionate acquaintance with details of the social life of the period. Two of the Commodore's squadron are bomb-ketches, a newfangled type of vessel armed with huge thirteen-inch mortars; there is an absorbing account of their tactical handling against a French privateer off Stralsund, and of the process by which these queer-looking craft were used, raised with "camels" to reduce their draught, in inshore fighting against French siege artillery in the Russian defence of Riga. The Stralsund operation, according to this story, brought Bernadotte's Sweden into the war against Napoleon. Here is the additional problem that the author has to tackle; the growing importance of Captain Hornblower in the world requires that he impinge on the known pattern of European political and military history. Mr. Forester, in fitting him into that pattern, shows some learning and great—almost excessive—plausibility. In its way *The Commodore* is especially suited for reading on a railway journey or in some other isolated situation. You have no reference books handy and cannot, therefore, worry about checking the historical facts. You arrive at your destination with a pleasant if transitory consciousness that a British naval officer talked the Czar Alexander into resisting Napoleon, personally defeated the siege of Riga and thus prevented the French from reaching St. Petersburg, taught Colonel Clausewitz the value of combined operations, and finally persuaded General Yorck to begin the Prussian defection from Napoleon's side. What could be more gratifying?

As a story-teller, Mr. Forester is of the school that makes everything as clear and as easy as it can be for the reader's understanding, thus freeing his attention to follow the story unobstructed. Miss Miller, being of another school, puts unnecessary obstacles in his way; and here again one must concede that she does it deliberately. Admittedly the purpose is different. In *On the Side of the Angels* she is painting a scene, expressing a psychological atmosphere. Telling a story comes second or third. One would not press the comparison too far; Miss Miller's task of analysing the contemporary and actual scene is one in which it is harder (though no less laudable) to be selective. Her characters are a dimly-seen and palely-coloured set of middle-class people centred round an R.A.M.C. hospital in Western England; the war has dislocated their lives or liberated their personalities, according to the way they look at it. She is honestly determined, I think, to present real people without distortion, but I must confess that I found no reality in them. Yet Miss Miller is a sensitive observer; many of her observations are probable, and some of them acute. The people are shadowy because of the mist of evocative verbal imagery that obscures them.

> Honor turned her head. Along the main road, where a row of telegraph-poles with white china florets looked like giant hyacinths, came a group of men in khaki.

No doubt it is a personal matter, but I am so bothered by those giant hyacinths that I cannot fix my eye on the little men in khaki. As for the telegraph-poles, they are in Limbo; the hyacinths have taken their place. Nor am I clear about Honor's sensations on taking mint sauce with her cut off the leg of lamb:

> She helped herself to a crisp burnished potato, to carrots, to mint-sauce; her plate, green-freckled, was pungent, suddenly, with vinegar.

This is very puzzling: does Honor like mint sauce or not? No doubt this sort of self-conscious writing is, like carrots and mint sauce, a matter of taste. Indefinite quantities of it, though, are hard work.

Independent People is the second novel by the Icelandic writer Halldor Laxness to be translated into English. It is a long book, to be read slowly and not to be lightly undertaken. At some points *Independent People* shows characteristics of a major work of art. Yet it is not such a work, at least not in the English translation; and the translation is in good English and inspires confidence. It is the story of the struggle for existence of a sheep farmer on a remote Icelandic croft, in the twentieth century, though the primitive life that it portrays, and the curious timelessness of the narrative, render the century barely distinguishable except through occasional fluctuations in the world prices of wool and mutton. The story opens in the manner of an heroic saga, telling of the evil spirits which in the past have haunted Bjartur's patch of marsh and moorland; it ends as a social or political tract, denouncing banking operations and financial policy as conducted in the Icelandic towns. Between the two extremes there is a variety of moods which can only with difficulty be induced to lie in the same æsthetic bed. That, perhaps, is why *Independent People* is not a major work of art, but a string of minor works in uncomfortable juxtaposition. There are moods of heroic gloom, of hard-bitten and cynical sarcasm, of lyrical tenderness. All are combined in the complex person of Bjartur, the "independent man." Bjartur farms his own patch in his own way, putting his sheep before his wife or his children, refusing help whether it is reasonable to refuse or unreasonable, burying child after child and sheep after sheep, demanding from his dependants all his own hardiness and endurance though they have not his resources of strength nor his stake in the game:

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"Independence is the most important thing of all in life. I say for my part that a man lives in vain until he is independent. People who aren't independent aren't people. A man who isn't his own master is as bad as a man without a dog."

Bjartur is a poet too, and a sentimentalist. He is also master of a vein of sardonic argumentative humour reminiscent of the Good Soldier Schweik. He plods ruggedly through twenty years of hardship, and is finally entangled with the banks through unaccustomed prosperity (caused by an incomprehensible rise in prices in the last war) and ruined. In the end the book declares itself as an attack on this "independence"—that is, on the stiff-necked individualism of a pastoral community which abhors co-operation and stultifies change. Laxness states the logical outcome of the sheep-farmer's independence thus:

> People simply can't afford to live like civilised human beings, as has been so often demonstrated before, and will be again; even middle-class farmers can't afford it, and in a boom year at that. The only sensible course for ordinary folk, the only one that pays, is to live in a little hut on the same cultural level as the negroes of Central Africa, and to let the merchant keep a flicker of life going in them, as the Icelandic nation has been doing for a thousand years now. People take more upon themselves than they can manage if they aim higher.

He does not state his alternative, but leaves the unconquerable Bjartur setting off, destitute, to maintain his independence on another patch of moor.

JOHN MIDGLEY

THE LOWDOWN ON THE COLONELS

Argentine Diary. By RAY JOSEPHS. *Gollancz.* *7s. 6d.*

Two years ago, one could hope that no newspaper correspondent would have to write a diary quite like this again. Very few people realised that while we were winning the war in Europe we were losing the peace in Latin America. But Mr. Josephs, who was the representative of the New York paper *P.M.* and the *Chicago Sun* in Buenos Aires, had to sit by and watch while the Argentine Army marched into the city, threw out President Castillo—himself no great friend of democracy—and set up the first Fascist dictatorship in the Americas. His excellent diary is a record of the events of 1943. As the only full account that has yet been published here, it should do a great deal to dispose of the widespread illusion that appeasement will succeed in Argentina where it failed with Hitler and Franco—who have both given consistent guidance and support to the military junta now occupying the Casa Rosada.

All the essential material is in this illuminating book. It is possible to follow the day-to-day developments as Mr. Josephs saw them. One can see his first reaction to some event, how he checks the story, reflects on it and amends or endorses his opinion after he has had a discussion with friendly Argentinos. The diary contains valuable and previously unpublished information about people, policies, public feeling, Nazi intrigue and espionage which could only be obtained by a careful and energetic observer on the spot. It is remarkable how much more coherent the picture becomes when the patchy reports that come through the rigorous censorship in Buenos Aires are compared with the private notes made by Mr. Josephs at the time he writes his censored cables. He points out that some of the big news agencies soon stopped sending controversial news items and confined themselves to official handouts for fear the military might close them down altogether. Until now, for instance, I have never managed to make out the real issues behind the internal conflicts among the colonels: Mr. Josephs explains which faction was pro-Allied and which pro-Nazi, why figurehead Ramirez changed places with figurehead Rawson in the first two days after the putsch in June, 1943, and why the revolt managed to secure considerable popular support at the time.

This, perhaps, is one of the most tragic parts of his story. The initial enthusiasm of the Radicals and other democratic groups was due to their belief that the coup was aimed at the unpopular and corrupt Castillo administration and that its equivocal neutrality policy would be replaced by one of genuine support for Pan-American unity and the cause of the democracies. But when it became clear that the new masters were much more ruthless and anti-democratic than the old, the democratic parties still failed to reach agreement amongst themselves and, divided, allowed things to drift on until they had lost the chance of effective resistance.

Some people in Britain find it convenient to dismiss many of the critical reports about the colonels' regime as propaganda inspired by the desire of American Big Business to exclude British economic influence from Argentina. In fact, the accounts of contemporary Argentina that have reached this country err on the side of moderation. Mr. Josephs, though an American, is by no means an apologist for the State Department or United States finance. Where he thinks American policy is ill-timed or misguided he is not afraid to say so, for he has lived long enough in Argentina to know the people and to understand their point of view. He wants them to recover their liberties and judges Allied policy by the contribution that it makes to that end rather than by formal diplomatic failures or successes. Read his daily comments on each fresh development, whether it was the detention of hundreds without trial, the dissolution of political parties, the closure of newspapers, anti-Semitic decrees or the abolition of religious or literary freedom, and one appreciates how he was moved as he watched Fascism triumph for the first time in the Western Hemisphere. Argentina was once proud of her universities. This is what happened to them when the students showed their dislike of the new regime:

> Exams are going on, but the universities all over the country look more like police barracks than *facultades*. There are cops outside, in the hallways and even in the classrooms.

A brain surgeon, with a world reputation, was dismissed, together with more than a hundred other professional and academic figures, for signing a petition of protest. At his final address, which was packed with students and colleagues, he talked of nothing but surgery until he ended with the words, "The next lecture will be given by a colonel." Have we learnt the lesson of Germany 1933? The colonels have.

This book does not pretend to be an exhaustive analysis; it contains very little historical background to the present situation; neither the social structure of Argentina nor her foreign economic relations receive much more than passing references—and both of these are vital factors for a full understanding of what has happened. But on the purely political plane, Mr. Josephs has given us a first-class picture of the way Fascism is working in Argentina to disrupt the stability of the post-war world and threaten the security of other Latin-American states. Unless there is a radical change in the near future—and Mr. Josephs is not optimistic about the chances of that—this book may have to go on a shelf alongside Edgar Mowrer's *Germany Puts the Clock Back.*

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HEALING DREAMS?

The Lady of the Hare, a Study in the Healing Power of Dreams. By JOHN LAYARD. *Faber and Faber.* 12s. 6d.

Mrs. Wright, a cowman's wife, had a daughter called Margaret, aged 16, who was extremely backward. The vicar of the small village where the Wrights lived asked Mr. Layard whether he could, as an "analytical psychologist" (which is the Jungian term for a psycho-analyst), help Margaret. Mr. Layard interviewed the girl and could get no results from her. He did, however, see Mrs. Wright, who recounted to him several dreams, one of them about a hare. Mrs. Wright, who had been rather unhappy, became happier as a result of her interviews with Mr. Layard. Margaret Wright, affected less directly (but here I must quote Mr. Layard),

> started having daylight visions which were in effect the continuation and extension in a still deeper sense of Mrs. Wright's own night-time dreams. These visions quickly developed into what can only be termed "second sight," combined with certain aspects of her mother's past history obtained through visionary and auditory contact with her mother's father, who had died when Margaret herself was only three years old. This visionary perception of her maternal grandfather soon became merged with the traditional figure of Bonnie Prince Charlie, who for the Northern Irish Wright family with its Scottish descent was a legendary hero, and this concept in turn merged into or was replaced by a higher concept still, that of the Heavenly Father, under whose direct guidance she now believes herself to be.

Moreover, Margaret now "knows quite often what her mother has dreamt before she is told," besides interpreting her mother's dreams.

And what happens to Mr. Layard at this point? He made a study of the hare throughout the history of literature and art, because the fact that a hare had occurred once in one of Mrs. Wright's dreams suggested to him that the hare was a Jungian archetype.

The reader will see that it is extraordinarily difficult to review this book. To some readers it will appear as a revelation, because it undoubtedly expresses an attitude towards life which is important: it insists that a struggle for redemption is going on within the mind of every human being. At the same time, just because this message is so important, it seems important not to discredit it; and, as a critic, I must point out the objections to Mr. Layard's methods.

In the first place, how far does Mr. Layard establish proof of the "healing power of dreams"? It is easy to believe that Mrs. Wright felt the force of revelation in her interviews with Mr. Layard, but as she was never really ill I cannot see that she has been any more healed than she would have been after a course of inspiring sermons at a Nonconformist chapel. Nor does Margaret Wright appear to have been cured. It seems questionable to publish an account of a supposed cure which took place as recently as 1940. Surely at least ten years should pass before a patient who is not really ill should be regarded as cured. It is the more difficult for the reader to judge the claims of this Jungian dream-analysis, because it is not complete: we are told that a further volume will describe Margaret's further development. Since this analysis is presented largely as a Jungian's critique of Freudian analysis, it seems a pity, if one cannot have a retrospective proof of Mr. Layard's cures, not to be at least up to date with them. Also, one would like to know about some of his other cases: what percentage of his failures or successes does Mrs. Wright represent?

The Jungian Analytical Psychologist concentrates, says Mr. Layard, on "the impersonal factors that lie beneath personal relationships." According to Mr. Layard's practice, this seems to mean telling the patient what his dreams mean and ignoring material that seems irrelevant. I do not think that any impartial person can read through Mr. Layard's own account of his dream-interpretation without concluding that he constantly suggests to Mrs. Wright what her dreams mean, and without suspecting that he thereby gains an ascendancy over her mind. This may not be so, but, as a critic, it is surely my task to point out that it seems highly probable. If I were a psycho-analyst I should probably learn more about Mr. Layard from his analytic method than about Mrs. Wright: even without being a psycho-analyst I suspect sales talk of the kind which tells us (on p. 96) that Analytic Psychology has arrived at a faith similar to Christianity "through that same process of inductive reasoning by which the best scientists work"—scientists, presumably, who publish incomplete results and no material evidence by which the reader can judge their hypothetical speculations. The whole argument to establish the Hare as a Jungian Archetype amounts to little more than a learned and lengthy disquisition on the fact that the hare has often occurred as a symbol, meaning various things, in art.

Yet I entirely sympathise with Mr. Layard's thesis expressed in the Theoretical Discussion:

> God has two aspects. On the one hand he includes all the forces of nature striving for life against every obstacle. On the other hand He is the Moral Law of which the purpose is to control nature. To serve God is to serve Him, not by opposing nature, but by transforming it in obedience to its own hidden laws which it is the purpose of psychology as the handmaiden of religion to reveal. . . . There is nothing that man cannot achieve within the limits of human frailty, will he but recognise that every material or moral advance opens beneath his feet a chasm of outraged nature, which, if he ignore it, will drag him down; but which, if he give it due honour, will, transformed by this act of faith, prove an inexhaustible well of inner knowledge.

Mr. Layard is an excellent preacher, but I doubt whether he has the patience of an analyst or the detachment of a scientist.

STEPHEN SPENDER

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Two agreeable books about the country, Kent and Essex respectively. As Mr. Church disarmingly describes himself as "a Cockney in the country," he probably will not resent the comment that Mr. Warren is more *of* the country than he. Mr. Church sees it from the outside, Mr. Warren from the inside; and although both of them, as poets, are charmed by the same things, and both of them, as objective men of letters, arrive at much the same conclusions, their line of approach is not quite the same. It is difficult, for instance, to imagine Mr. Warren writing, as Mr. Church writes, of "the playfulness of old Mother Nature," or of "the old lady having a mischievous side to her coquettish personality." Quite as well aware of these peculiarities as Mr. Church, his reaction to them is more practical, more technical, because (I suspect) he has grown up with them and takes them as a necessary trial to be endured and overcome. Sensitive but not sentimental, he knows better than to romanticise. Those who live close up against Nature never romanticise.

Not that Mr. Church romanticises altogether. He has dug his own garden and has fought with the clay of the Kentish Weald, an experience which should suffice to clear prettily preconceived notions away from any man. But he is a de-

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ADAM & CHARLES BLACK

termined optimist, and a belief in the good, the beautiful, and the true, is perhaps *plus fort que lüi*. Then, as he admits, he is only half a countryman. London tugs at him still, and when he refers to the townsman who is "never quite natural in the country . . . his bones mortared and his nature paved," he is quite openly referring to himself. Still, he makes a very good job of it. He has observed and absorbed; he is amused without being patronising; and above all he is amused not only by the yokels but by Mr. Richard Church, of London, in his new role. "His old flannel trousers," he says, "are older and shabbier than anything a countryman would wear. His sunburn is deeper, too. He goes native with a vengeance; and a passer-by, seeing him at work in the open (on a sunny day) might easily mistake him for a local product."

Mr. Warren has no need to go deliberately native, and the harsher, more realistic note is at once audible. He has a great respect for the countryman of the old type, for his traditions, and for his methods: the inherent neatness in everything he does; the perfect symmetry in which he will lay poles and brushwood aside, or will build the potato-clamp "neatly thatched with straw, its mud walls patted smooth as plaster." If his book has a moral at all, it is to plead for a new rural order in which the labourer may have house and land of his own on secure tenure, a plea surely justified if pride in labour and energy in enterprise are to be preserved.

These two books are both excellently illustrated. Mr. Tunnicliffe in *Green Tide* produces some interesting *pointilliste* effects and also reveals a nice sense of humour—notably the portrait of Mr. Church in, apparently, his dressing-gown, at his front door, inviting the Corgi to issue forth into the misty morning. Mr. Hennell's rather loose drawings are perhaps more imaginative than Mr. Tunnicliffe's precise woodcuts. Vigorous, they have the quality of suggesting more than they in fact state, though it must be admitted that the figures of men and animals are sometimes (not always) curiously wooden.

V. SACKVILLE-WEST

Scotland. By IAN FINDLAY. *Oxford.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

In a hundred and fifty pages, Mr. Findlay has written a brilliant introduction to the history and culture of Scotland. Anyone who wishes to understand the complex of geography, tradition and economics which go to make up contemporary Scottish life should read this little book, which is a model for informative discussion of a nation whose problems are too little understood by its larger neighbour. Mr. Findlay begins with a description of the people and, avoiding the cruder type of generalisation about national character, succeeds in drawing a living picture of the *nuances* of disposition and temperament which distinguish the Scot's attitude to life. He does this against the factual background of the agriculture, geology and industry of the country, sketching the main features of the distinctive national institutions. Finally, there are two excellent chapters on intellectual and cultural traditions. The section dealing with the influence of the Kirk shows that Mr. Findlay has a very real insight into matters of national psychology. This book may do something to draw attention to the question of Scotland's future, for, as Mr. Findlay points out, Scotland is "a test case. Her problem is the problem of whether the nation is a unit to be discarded as of merely sentimental interest or a germinal organism without which human society cannot maintain itself in a sound condition."

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 6 in C Major.* London Philharmonic Orch., cond. Beecham. (H.M.V. DB6200-3.)

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 8 in B Minor* ("Unfinished"). National Symphony Orch., cond. Fistoulari. (Decca K1114-6.)

HANDEL: *The Messiah*: Overture: London Symphony Orch., cond. Maurice Miles. (Columbia DX1182.)

HANDEL: *The Messiah*: "He shall feed his flock" and "He was Despised." Gladys Ripley with London Symphony Orch., cond. Miles. (H.M.V. C3424.)

PUCCINI: "Oh I entreat Thee, Fire!" and "Thou who with Ice" (*Turandot*). Joan Hammond with London Symphony Orch., cond. Susskind. (H.M.V. B9407.)

FERGUSON: *Five Bagatelles.* Myra Hess. (H.M.V. C3423.)

Let a composer be a genius and his admirers will not permit him a single lapse: if the chain of masterpieces be broken—even for a moment—we feel we are being let down. This is, of course, most unfair: only small men avoid failures (by aiming low), and a range of mountains is improved, rather than otherwise, by an alternation of high peaks with lower. Yet there seems no reason, on the face of it, why the year 1818 should not have produced a symphonic masterpiece from Schubert's pen. He was already reaching maturity (at the age of twenty-one!) and had some of his most impressive songs, as well as a quantity of other music in all forms, to his credit; and his technique of composition was as good as ever it was going to be. Yet I think it is impossible not to find the Sixth Symphony something of a disappointment. I don't say there is nothing in it which will give you a moment's pleasure: with Schubert that would be impossible. But the level of inspiration—especially if you compare this symphony with the Fifth—is pretty consistently low. The work begins well, in the Austrian woodland style which is spell-binding, from Haydn to Bruckner; but after the exposition the music peters out in the kind of thing which any talented composer of the day—say Méhul—might have struck off. Even Méhul could hardly have felt proud of this symphony, with its mechanical developments and its empty Finale, which assumes Haydn's attire in the hope—here vain—of capturing his wit and gaiety. But Schubert is the very last composer whom one expects to be stingy with his material; and that, I think, is what contributes, more than any other single factor, to the sheer dullness of the symphonic fabric of this work. On the other hand, I have very little fault to find with the performance or recording. There are some considerable cuts (perhaps not altogether a disadvantage), and the orchestral tone in the Scherzo becomes rather wooden and characterless; but the latter may be partly due to the rigid three-*one*-two-three-*one* rhythm which precludes the variety of stress inherent in the three-four metre. Otherwise this set is a good deal more than adequate to the occasion.

No one, I expect, has ever felt dissatisfied with the B minor Symphony—except as regards its unfinished state. The new recording is a worthy one, carefully and soberly played—an addition to their catalogue on which Decca may justly pride themselves. The National Symphony Orchestra is now, in my opinion, the best in London, and I hope we may expect from it a series of "masterworks" to supply those famous recordings of the past which are now either out of date or withdrawn from circulation. While I am on the subject of Schubert I should like to ask (not for the first time) why it is that no attention is ever paid to the Seventh Symphony—that mysterious work in E of which Weingarter so tactfully completed the orchestration. Apart from some of the orchestral parts, it is in no other way unfinished, and it is in every sense a better symphony than the Sixth.

The *Messiah* discs are very small potatoes. The orchestra sounds meagre and the performance is sleepy.

In the arias from *Turandot* Miss Hammond's brilliant execution preserves the performance from the mediocrity which dogs the steps of almost all English

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renderings of Italian opera. The accompaniment, too, is up to standard.

Dame Myra Hess does everything that can be done to persuade us that Howard Ferguson's *Five Bagatelles* are outstanding music. I cannot myself see that they have any originality; but, at a time when so much new music is formless, perversely hideous, or both, it is something of a relief to find pieces as well composed and as easy to listen to as these Bagatelles. They must be very agreeable to play.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

Week-end Competitions

No. 792

Set by A. F. W.

Winston and Mahatma Gandhi die on the same day and meet on their way to wherever they are going in the after life. The usual prizes are offered for an imaginary conversation between these two, in 200 words or less—better less. Entries by April 10th.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 788

Set by Roger Marvell

The usual prizes are offered for a verse epitaph in not more than eight lines on a pet.

Report by Roger Marvell

A very large number of entries, many of which seemed inspired by personal affection—some also that were hymns of hate. I wish there were room to print a larger selection of entries, and offer my regrets to those competitors to whom I can offer only the rosette "Highly Commended." These include R. Murray, I. C. Saul, Leslie Johnson, Joyce Johnson, J. R. Till, S. Dagley, D. N. Dalglish, Minevia, V.B., C. S. Cook, Douglas Hawson, W. H. Dew, Freewill, N. B. Severn, Terence Melican, F. L. A., Sir Robert Witt, Messy, R. S. Jaffray, P. G., G. J. Blundell, W. Stewart, H. C. Duffin. I am still left with fourteen entries between which the prize money should be divided.

By his Cottage Door

Here lies my dog Spot,
He was the best friend I'd got.
He'd have liked to lie near,
So I've buried him here.

WILLIAM BLISS

Epitaph on a Favourite Cat,
Who fell a Victim to Wartime Restrictions

Here lies our Tib who, when Cod failed her, tried
To live on Fishpaste, liked it not, and died.

J. H. BROOK

On Maou dying at the age of six months

Strange sickness fell upon this perfect creature
Who walked the equal friend of Man and Nature.
Her little Bodie, e'en as by a shroud,
Lay lapped in its unseen, dishevelling cloud;
Till to her eyes, unasking but afraid,
The old reply of endless night was made.

F. C. C.

Cat of Cats

Now Tom's translated, not a mouse
Dare inhabit Heaven's house;
Cherubim shall bring him milk,
Seraphs stroke his coat of silk
While, with whiskers aureoled,
He shall walk the streets of gold
Or, happily relaxed, lie prone,
Deeply purring, by the throne.

VIVIEN BALKLEY

Epitaph in E Minor

I kept a pet. The pet became a pest.
The pest is dead—
Whatever is, is best. L. E. G.

Tippetty Testudo, R.I.P.

Five summers through you ranged contentedly,
Snapped the green leaf, worshipped the sun and dreamed;
The lamplight zone you loved; five winters slept;
Then laid a moon-white egg and ceased to be.

No more your antique carapace I'll see
Among my books, your rose-leaf jaws agape
In the lamp's warmth, neck stretched to my caress,
Your too wise eye. . . . Hic jacet. R.I.P.

E. M. HERRING

Epitaph upon a Pet Tortoise
Fell Asleep Autumn 1944

What did you genuinely think
Torpid behind that scaly blink,
Or breaking, for an hour-long yawn,
Your summer progress down the lawn?

Twixt immobility and sleep
You kept your counsel—and still keep:
I only know it hurt to part,
Unmoving mover of my heart.

R. J. P. HEWISON

Epitaph on a Peke

Black jowl, brief nose, furred ears and brindled hide—
All these, and more, we lost when Chizai died;
With wide plumed tail, and small pink flickering tongue
He was as fair as any ware of Sung.

Less was his mind—he knew nor good nor ill,
He would have kissed the hand that robbed the till,
Yet in this grey, sad world he played his part—
An idle dog—a perfect work of art.

G. D. HOBSON

On Spot

Poor puppy, drunk with spirits high,
Who scarce knew life 'ere he must die:
He tried to bite a tram. Not this
The ignorance the wise call bliss!

O small, sweet children who, like him,
All recklessly risk life and limb,
Think on the fate of LITTLE SPOT,
And don't do things that you should not.

ALLAN M. LAING

Epitaph to my Dog

I have not heart to throw away
The broken basket where he lay.

ADRIAN PORTER

On the Disappearance of a Favourite Tortoise

Seized by some strange reptilian whim
Poor Geoffrey flip-flopped down the lane;
His native caution fell from him
And he was never seen again.

Grimly we ran, with hue and cry,
To catch him up—of no avail;
And so did once Achilles try,
And so did swift Achilles fail.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

A Dormouse

Here lies a dormouse—
It wasn't enormous,
For Rachel could rock it
To sleep in her pocket;
Death took it (the knave!)
And it went to its grave
On the tiniest of biers,
With Rachel in tears.

GERALD SUMMERS

On a Parrot

Poor Polly who so often made us laugh
With strident quips and manner melancholy,
Has died pronouncing her own epitaph:
"Poor Polly." WILLY TADPOLE

Epitaph on a Hen

Here lies the body of my dear hen
Sadly missed from the garden pen
With her timid clucks, her beady stare,
Her dainty feathered underwear
Billowing over her artless legs.
And, while I confess that I miss her eggs,
'Tis she herself that I truly mourn—
My dear, ingenuous White Leghorn.

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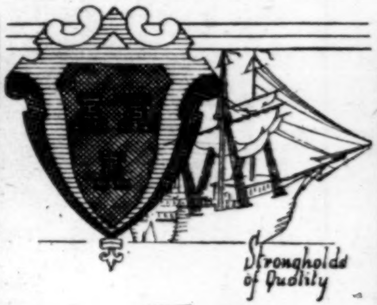

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